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**Investigating the washback effect of the national
examination on Indonesian practices: Perceptions of
teachers, students and parents of test impact**

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Abstract

Washback is a phenomenon found internationally in high stakes examinations. This study set in Indonesia sought to explore the washback influence of the national examination system on the attitudes, behaviours and motivations of teachers, learners and parents (Pearson, 1998). Previous studies on national examination in Indonesia had explored the concept without paying sufficient attention to the context and culture within which washback takes place; a culture where examination corruption remains professionally unacknowledged but all too often remains part of practice.

Using an interpretivist paradigm this study explored the perceptions of the experiences of teachers, learners and parents involved in the national examination system and identified its washback effect. In particular it explored ways in which the national examination affected teaching and learning practices in final year classrooms that in Indonesia are dominated by the national examination cycle. Finally, the study investigated how students' experiences in the national examination year might be improved.

The evidence emerging from the thematic analysis of interviews with eight English teachers, ten parents and focus group discussions with 29 final year students attending junior secondary schools identified three main washback themes. The national examination had influenced participants' feelings, their perceptions and their practices. All participating groups had participants who reported a wide range of feelings about their experiences of national examination, from neutral feelings to high levels of anxiety. The analysis also indicated that participants in each group had recognised both the positive and negative washback effects of national examination. The use of the examination for selection purposes was perceived to motivate students to learn. However, the findings also suggested that the national examination was considered by members of each group to assess students in ways that were regarded as unfair. All three groups showed how the examination influenced their role and practices as teachers, students and parents. However, although members of both parental and pupil communities made reference to a number of corrupt practices, no teacher acknowledged such practice focusing only on the more conventional washback effects of curriculum narrowing and rehearsal pedagogy.

The evidence from this study was used to extend a model of the relationship between learning and assessment theory proposed by Baird, et.al. (2017). Only when there is an adequate consideration of the culture within which these theories emerge can there be potential for these theories to have traction in offering a lens through which to interrogate practice. Finding ways to engage with features of Indonesian school culture including anxiety, religion, family expectations, corruption, gender inequality and collectivism is a central part of understanding the nature of national examination washback. Without a deeper understanding and acceptance of the problem, Indonesia, and other countries in similar circumstances, is likely to remain in a cycle of constant innovation with little meaningful, constructive change in the assessment process.

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Author's declaration

“I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.”

Printed Name: Maya Puspitasari

Signature: 

List of abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
AfL	Assessment for Learning
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BERA	British Education Research Association
BOS	Bantuan Operasional Sekolah
BSNP	Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan
EBTANAS	Evaluasi Belajar Tahap Akhir Nasional – A term used in 1980-2000 to refer to national examination
FSGI	Federasi Seluruh Guru Indonesia – Federation of Indonesian Teachers Associations
IPEA	Initiative for Public Expenditure Analysis
KTSP	Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan
LPTK	Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Keguruan – Teacher Training Institute
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PLPG	Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Profesi Guru - Professional Education and Training for Teachers
SD	Sekolah Dasar
SKB	Sanggar Kegiatan Belajar – Learning Activity Studio
SKL	Standar Kompetensi Lulusan - Standard of graduate's competence
SLB	Sekolah Luar Biasa
SMA	Sekolah Menengah Atas
SMK	Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan
SMP	Sekolah Menengah Pertama
SNP	Standar Nasional Pendidikan
SPG	Sekolah Pendidikan Guru – Senior secondary level for teaching training
UAN	Ujian Akhir Nasional – A term used in 2001-2004 to refer to the national examination
UN	Ujian Nasional – A term used in 2006 up to present to refer to the national examination
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Chapter 1 : Introduction

This chapter sets out the rationale for undertaking a study to investigate the washback effect of the national examination in Indonesia. The chapter begins by examining and defining the idea of washback and points to the complexity of the idea as it relates to the impact of tests and examinations on practices in schools and classrooms. The context of the study is introduced, and its significance is explored. Next, the three research questions of this study are presented. This chapter concludes by outlining the remaining chapters of the thesis.

1.1 Rationale for the study

I heard the term ‘washback’ for the first time when I was studying for my masters’ degree in the University of Edinburgh in the academic year 2011-2012. I was sitting in a lecture theatre listening to a lecture about language testing when the lecturer said the word ‘washback’. Although the term was new to me, it described a phenomenon that I had encountered in Indonesia when working as a teacher with students in the year in which they sat high stakes national examination. I found the concept fascinating and decided to focus my master’s dissertation on a review of the literature on the washback effect (Puspitasari, 2012). The literature review examined different understandings of the term washback and the impact of washback on practice in schools and classrooms. However, the literature I reviewed did not capture the ideas of washback as I had experienced them as a teacher in Indonesia. Similarly, the literature from Indonesia appeared to have been written from the perspective of the idea of washback as it emerged in Western societies. The existing studies (Furaidah et al., 2015; Saukah and Cahyono, 2015; Tirtaningrum and Ngadiman, 2015) did not appear to have paid sufficient attention to the context and culture that are such an important part of life in Indonesia. The focus of this study is to investigate perceptions of teachers, students and parents of their experiences in the national examination system. It sets out to explore ideas of washback within the distinctive culture of Indonesia, to gather in-depth information that would elicit the complexities of the culture, rather than to look at Indonesian culture through Western eyes. This was the beginning of my own research journey.

1.2 Beginning to define washback

Washback is a commonly used term related to the impact of tests and examinations on practice. It was first introduced three decades ago and is a concept that has developed over time. Buck (1988) defines washback as the influence of the test on classroom practice, recognising that this influence can be positive or negative. A range of ways in which tests impact on classroom practices has been identified. For example, Alderson and Wall (1993: 117) suggest that washback exists when “teachers and learners do things they would not necessarily otherwise do because of the test”. Messick (1996:241) argued that the washback effect also included test rehearsal behaviour, where teachers and learners spend a significant amount of time in classrooms practising for tests. The effect of high-stakes tests on the curriculum, teaching and assessment can include an impact on learning goals, teaching objectives, teaching materials, and on teachers and students.

Classroom practice before a test is administered therefore might be constrained by test preparation. Messick (1982: 70) defines test preparation as “any intervention procedure specifically undertaken to improve test scores, whether by improving the skills measured by the test or by improving the skills for taking the test, or both”. This definition reflects a situation in which any preparation made before the test is aimed at improving the test scores. The preparation itself may include teaching test-taking skills, teaching the content known to be covered by the test, teaching to the test, practising on items of the test or cheating (Smith, 1991: 526-537).

1.3 The context for and significance of the study

In Indonesia the national examination taken by students as they come to the end of Year 6 (6th grade of primary school), Year 9 (third grade of junior secondary school) and Year 12 (third grade of senior secondary school) have been increasingly used to assess the performance of not only students but also teachers, school principals, institutions and the education system as a whole. This phenomenon has been perceived to have led students and teachers to focus mainly on gaining high scores in the national examination (Mukminin et al., 2013; Tirtaningrum and Ngadiman, 2015). There is also evidence that high stakes examinations can impact on the professional accountability of teachers, shifting it towards a focus on complying with the expectations of stakeholders, including students, parents and policy makers, rather than on promoting high quality learning experiences. I have chosen to study the washback effect of this national examination on the Indonesian classroom in order to attempt to gain a deeper

understanding of the relationship between the actual experiences of teachers and learners in the year in which high stakes examinations are taken and parents' perceptions of the impact and use of the examination. Throughout my ten years' teaching experience I have been shocked by the evidence of the major impact that the high stakes examination has on schools, classrooms and learners in Indonesia. The final year of school is often little more than test preparation for the national examination.

Washback in Indonesia has implications far beyond those commonly reported in the literature. For example, from 2004 until 2007 I was teaching English in a state primary school. During my experience there I was faced with an ethical dilemma, one that many teachers have subsequently told me that they have also faced. I was in a room where several teachers from five public primary schools were gathered. Our task was to mark the multiple-choice examination our students had recently taken. We used a marking key to mark our pupils' responses to the External Examination. When we shared the results, it was clear that our students had not performed as well as we hoped they would. Given the overall very low scores, it was decided to remark the lowest examination results upwards, to increase the pass rate. I felt trapped since I was being instructed to do something that I believed was wrong.

In Indonesia, the National Board for Educational Standards (Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan - BSNP) was formerly responsible for managing and organizing the national examination. BSNP would invite one university to coordinate external examination supervisors. In 2008, external supervisors were to invigilate the examination in every school. Each school would be assigned one external supervisor. Those supervisors were members of the teaching staff and final year university students. In 2008, I was selected to be one of the external supervisors for monitoring the national examination in a junior secondary school. Along with other external supervisors, I was asked to attend a meeting that was also attended by the principals of 22 schools. I was curious when one school principal announced to the meeting that the schools needed the supervisors' cooperation to make the examination run well. What was meant by his reference to an agreement was unclear. However, one day I was walking past classrooms where the examination was being held. There, I saw some students gathered and one of them was holding a piece of paper. I moved closer to the students without entering the classroom as I was forbidden to do that. When they saw me approaching, the students hid the paper from me. I went on to another classroom and the same thing happened. This process was repeated in every classroom I observed.

I called the supervisor coordinator to report this unusual activity. He recognised the pattern as consistent with previous experiences he had had when students were given examination answers by the school principal. He came to the school to challenge the school principal, but the school principal denied that he had given the answers to his students before the examination. Unfortunately, I had no concrete evidence. I really regretted that I had not taken one of those papers to prove that the students were cheating. Eventually, there was nothing we could do about the school even when I had observed that the students were cheating and that it was the school leader who had provided the answers. Interestingly, there was a washback effect from this experience. I was blacklisted in the school district. Every junior secondary school in that district asked the coordinator not to appoint me to be the external supervisor in the following year so I was appointed to be an external supervisor at a senior secondary school in a different district. In 2010, the post of external supervisor monitoring the national examination in the junior secondary school was abolished due to the number of complaints coming from school principals.

Cizek (2001: 2) defines the act of cheating as “any action that violates the rules for administering a test”. Though it seems natural to have test-preparation in the classroom, in Indonesia the washback can go far beyond that. However, test preparation may also be regarded as a form of cheating since, when the teachers focus their teaching practices on teaching to the test rather than on teaching matter based on the designated syllabus, they cheat their pupils out of a broad and balanced education. The test preparation may narrow the curriculum and, although the practice lessons in the classroom may be helpful for the high-stakes test, they risk diluting the students’ creativity (Walker, 2014). Popham (2001: 18) argued that “because of pressures to boost students’ test scores, teachers have engaged in inappropriate test preparation”. One of the effects of high-stakes testing evidenced by Smith (1991) was that the teachers focussed on matter covered by the external test in ways that led the teachers to narrow the curriculum and disadvantage students. Alderson (1984: 10) offers an example of this in the context of learning English in Indonesia. He postulated that if “one does not have an oral component in one’s test then one cannot expect students to pay much attention to their oral English” since the students would not learn content or skills that were not tested.

1.4 Research questions

This research study seeks to explore teachers', students' and parents' perceptions of the national examination in one district in Indonesia and its washback on their practices. My three research questions are:

1. How do the teachers, students and parents in one district in Indonesia perceive the impact of the national examination?
2. How does the national examination affect teaching and learning practices in final year classrooms dominated by the national examination cycle?
3. How might students' experiences in the national examination year be improved?

1.5 Structure of the thesis

I began this first chapter by outlining my personal motivation for undertaking this study and providing a general introduction to the context of the study. I began to explore the complexity of the idea of washback as it relates to the impact of tests and examinations on practices in schools and classrooms. I reflected on an extended concept of washback and its significance in Indonesia. The three research questions of this study were presented. In this final section of the chapter, I outline the remaining chapters in the study.

Chapter 2 sets the more detailed context for the study. It outlines the structure of the Indonesian education and assessment system. The chapter also identifies the development of the national examination as part of assessment system in the country. Finally, it examines teaching as a vocation in that context and explores recruitment procedures.

Chapter 3 presents a review of the literature. It begins by exploring the concept of assessment, the various purposes served by assessment (assessment for learning, assessment of learning and assessment for accountability purposes). The chapter also explores how these purposes emerge in different ways by using examples from different nations. The chapter reflects on some of the complexities of assessment in action, with a focus on washback effects. The chapter considers evidence about the impact of the national examination in Indonesia and offers a critique of existing studies. A model proposed by Baird et al. (2017) regarding interrelationship between learning and assessment theories is discussed. The chapter concludes by arguing for the need for this study to be conducted in the Indonesian context.

Chapter 4 details the methodology. The chapter provides the rationale for the methodology adopted. The decision to use a case study approach is explored and the decisions taken about the sites and participants are considered. The chapter then reflects on ethical issues emerging in this study. The data gathering tools, including semi-structured interview and focus group discussion, are described. The approach taken to analysis of the data gathered (thematic analysis) is discussed. In conclusion, the process of analysis, transcribing the interview and focus group discussion transcripts, coding the data and interpreting the data are described.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 present the findings from the study and discuss critically the themes emerging from the data analysis in the context of the research literature. Each chapter focuses on one group of participants involved in this study. Chapter 5 presents teachers' perceptions of the impact of the national examination on their teaching practices and on their feelings and views of the national examination. Chapter 6 presents the evidence from the data from students' focus group discussions about their experiences of the national examination and its impact on them as learners. Chapter 7 considers the evidence from parents including their perceptions of the impact of the national examination on their children.

Chapter 8 presents the insights that emerged from the data analysis from across all three groups. The chapter reflects between the relationships of theories of learning and assessment drew by Baird, Andrich, Hopfenbeck and Stobart (2017) with the findings gathered from the study.

Chapter 9, the final chapter, begins with a review of the study as a whole and identifies the contribution to knowledge made by this investigation, including implications for theory. Some possible recommendations for teachers, students, parents and policy makers are identified. The limitations of the study and possible issues for future research are identified. The study concludes with a reflection on my own learning journey.

This chapter builds on the information provided in Chapter One and sets out the context for the study in more detail. It introduces the structure of education system including the school levels and the types of school (section 2.1). The chapter then describes the three major forms of assessment - school assessment, the school-leaving examination and the entrance examination - which are explored in the section 2.2 on

Assessment in Indonesia. National examination as part of external summative assessment in Indonesia is also outlined (section 2.3). The next section, 2.4, explores teaching as a vocation in Indonesia. The section illustrates the different pathways into the profession. This chapter then identifies four major challenges for education in Indonesia in section 2.5, namely, educational inequality, unequal distribution of teachers, corruption in local government and corruption in schools. The chapter concludes with a summary of key ideas emerging across sections.

2.1 Indonesian education system

There has been regular curriculum change in Indonesia. Since the country declared its independence in 1945, the curriculum has been changed eleven times: 1947, 1964, 1968, 1973, 1975, 1984, 1994, 1997, 2004, 2006 and 2013 (Ilma & Pratama, 2015). Conventionally, the rationale for change has been related to the needs identified by the government in power at the time, based on their political ideology, and related to perceived economic and social priorities. Each set of changes has been significant, involving changing the aims of education and the structure and content of the curriculum.

In response to the implementation of two laws (the 1999 Law Number 22 and 25), starting from 2001, centralised political power was swept back, and major responsibilities have been devolved to Indonesia's local government (Bjork, 2003). The new laws had important implications for many areas of governance, including education. The education system was no longer the monopoly of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Central and local government had to share the responsibility of running the education system. Central government is responsible for legislation as the basis of policies on the standard of competencies, curriculum, evaluation and the education calendar. The implementation of policy, teacher recruitment and financial management are in the hands of provincial and regional government.

More recently, in 2013, the national government initiated a move away from a highly centralised model of curriculum and sought to devolve aspects of the curriculum to schools. This was done in response to an ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) program called AEC (ASEAN Economic Community). This program aimed to create a single market and a common production base with equitable development across its 10 member countries. The government's vision for the most recent curriculum was consistent with the vision currently articulated in many countries internationally

that includes academic development, personal development and social development (Volante, 2015). In Indonesia, the vision of the government was that students should become not only successful learners but should also develop ‘strong character’ (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2012). Honesty, discipline, responsibility, caring, politeness and confidence are among those characteristics described as the main competences in the 2013 curriculum. In implementing the curriculum, the government provided syllabi, student textbooks and teacher handbooks to motivate the teachers to improve their instructional practices (Suratno, 2014).

However, due to complaints expressed by many teachers, the new government decided to review and to withdraw plans for the 2013 curriculum (for example, Christy and Herman, 2014). One of the strongest evidence sources explaining the nature of the teachers’ complaints came from the Federation of Indonesian Teachers Associations (*Federasi Seluruh Guru Indonesia* - FSGI); a non-governmental organisation represents teacher unions from various parts of Indonesia. The FSGI claimed that teachers faced many problems regarding the implementation of the curriculum. Teachers reported that they were not well-prepared to teach the materials sent out by government. Some teachers identified gaps in the curriculum, for example, a lack of subject matter for international school students (Christy and Herman, 2014). As a response of the complaints, schools returned to using the 2006 curriculum – School based curriculum (KTSP) as the 2013 curriculum was deemed to have failed to be implemented in schools (Ilma & Pratama, 2015). However, the new Minister of Education and Culture sought to reverse that decision in July 2014 and obliged every school to implement the 2013 curriculum (Darsih, 2014).

Law number 20 year 2003, is the legislation that set the framework for the current education system in Indonesia. It consists of formal, non-formal and informal education. Formal education includes primary and secondary education. Non-formal education is intended for those who have not graduated from formal schooling. One example of non-formal education is a schooling program called *Kejar Paket*. Informal education includes home schooling. Informal education is a legally accepted part of the education system in Indonesia. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (2016: 12) states clearly that “the outcomes of informal education shall be recognized as being equal to the outcomes of formal education and non-formal education after passing successfully in an assessment according to national education standards”. These three forms of education are offered to provide equal status for the entire population in

Indonesia so they can be educated and the education they achieve can be useable in the marketplace (Marhaeni, 2018).

The following two sub-sections describe the structure of the Indonesian education system: Levels and Types of school.

2.1.1 Levels of school

Learning for six years in primary school and for three years in junior secondary school is compulsory in Indonesia. To be enrolled in primary school, a child is highly recommended to graduate from pre-school education. Between the ages of 7 to 15, young people in Indonesia complete nine-year compulsory education. For those who graduate from junior secondary school and whose family can afford to have their child to remain in education, young people study for a further three years in senior secondary school. Graduating from senior secondary school offers access to Higher Education. The different school levels are outlined in the next two pages.

Pre-school

Pre-primary education serves as preparation for children who will study in primary schools. It is under the supervision of the Directorate of the Early Age Education Development of the Ministry of Education. Most kindergartens in Indonesia are run privately. Even though it is not officially compulsory, most primary schools nowadays have introduced the requirement for applicants to be graduated in kindergarten level before they can study in primary schools (Mareza, 2016).

Primary

The Ministry of Education and Culture dictates that local government has an obligation to provide nine years compulsory education for every citizen. The compulsory education program consists of six years in primary school (*Sekolah Dasar – SD*) and three years in junior secondary school (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama – SMP*). The compulsory education program started in 1994 and was based on the Government Regulation Number 28 in 1990 on Primary Education. Primary education in this context covers education in primary school and junior secondary school. As of 2014, the government spends 20% of its total budget on education, including the funding of schools (Tobias et al., 2014). The budget includes the financial grant (BOS) that the government must provide to all state and private schools. The amount of the BOS fund depends on the total numbers of students of each school who have made an application

to receive funds from the BOS budget. However, while the government obliges the school to provide free education for all students in Indonesia, “there are costs associated with schooling in terms of forgone earnings, incidental expenses (for example, transport, books, uniforms) and voluntary contributions or informal fees that schools may still charge” (Tobias et al., 2014: 32).

Senior secondary education

As with junior secondary education, senior secondary school (*Sekolah Menengah Atas* - SMA) also lasts for three years. This level of education is divided into two tracks; general and vocational. In the second year of the general track, the students are asked to choose from three subject clusters: natural science, social science and languages. Students in each cluster have more hours in their specialist learning subjects. For example, in languages, the students learn one or more languages besides English, such as, Japanese, German or French. Upon completion of the three years of schooling, the students need to take the national examination after they have taken the school examination for all their subjects.

Higher education

Higher education is the name given to tertiary level education in Indonesia. Universities or Institutes, Academies, Polytechnic and Advanced Schools are the forms of this level of education. Courses within these institutions last from between one year and five years depending on the program taken. There are first, second and third diplomas, strata one, two and three. For state institutions, there are three ways to gain admission. The first is by invitation. This is intended for those students who are high achievers in the senior secondary or vocational secondary schools. The applicants are required to send a report book provided by the school showing their scores are relatively high. The second way is by taking the national entrance exam. Applicants may choose two programs in the same institution, one program in two different institutions or two programs in two different institutions. Candidates must achieve a certain grade in each program in every institution. These grades are applied nationally as the requirement for all applicants if they are to pass the examination. The third way is a similar process undertaken by the private institution as an independent exam. This examination is provided by the institution itself.

A problem that concerns the Indonesian government is that low socioeconomic families are hardly present in higher education (OECD, 2015). The government has

established a policy stating that state universities must recruit at least 20% its students from low socioeconomic status and remote areas in Indonesia (Law 12/2012 article 74). Based on this policy, every state university including the Open University in Indonesia is supposed to apply stratification in tuition fee levels; a policy that has been labelled Single Tuition Fee (*Uang Kuliah Tunggal* – UKT). The policy allows the students who studied in state higher education institutions to pay one kind of fee for each semester and the amount is stratified based on the students' socioeconomic status.

2.1.2 Types of schools

The educational administration in Indonesia is in part decentralized. The central, provincial and district governments share the responsibility of running the system. The central government is responsible for legislation and policies related to standards and competencies, curriculum, evaluation and the education calendar. Meanwhile, implementation of policy, teacher recruitment and financial management are in the hands of provincial and district government. The next five sub-sections outline five types of schools in Indonesia: Provider, Ministry management, Schools for students with special needs, Senior secondary, and Non-formal education.

Provider: State and private schools

OECD and ADB (2015: 69) indicated that “while only 7% of primary schools are private, the share increase to 56% of junior secondary schools and 67% of senior secondary schools. Under the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), there are two directorates responsible for state school education. First is the Directorate General of Primary Education. Since the number of years of compulsory education rose to nine in 2000 (Tobias et al., 2014), junior secondary schools are included in this directorate with the primary schools. Senior secondary schools are under the management of the Directorate General of Secondary Education.

Private school refers to the school where the finance can be supported by the government, but all the teachers are non-civil servant teachers. Most parents in Indonesia are likely to have a state school as their first choice for their child's schooling (Bangay, 2005). However, Tobias et al. (2014: 13) argue that “private schools play an important role in Indonesia in complementing state education and helping to meet demands that the public school system has been unable to meet, particularly in poor and rural areas”.

Ministry management: Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) and Ministry of Religious Affair (MoRA)

The education system in Indonesia is managed by two ministries: MoEC and MoRA. More than 80% of schools are under the MoEC, and the remaining including Islamic schools or madrasah are the responsibility of the MoRA (Tobias et al., 2014).

Islamic education under the management of MoRA is provided from primary to higher education. This type of school can be run by either state or private sectors. In addition to the core curriculum regulated by the MoEC, this type of school also includes Islamic subjects. As most people in Indonesia are Muslim, the government makes provision for schools based on Islamic values. The content of the curriculum tends to give more emphasis on Islamic studies. In these schools, the students learn about Arabic, Islamic history, the Holy Quran and other subjects related to Islam. There are a number of schools that have boarding facilities for the students (*pesantren*). It means that the students are required to stay at schools all the time, and the length of the study day is much longer, usually between 4 a.m. until 8 p.m. There are also a number of schools based on other faiths, including Christian, Buddhism or Hindu. However, those schools are under the ministry of education and in private sectors.

Schools for students with special needs

The government also provides schools for those who have additional learning needs, called SLB (*Sekolah Luar Biasa*). In Indonesia these are referred to as ‘learning disabilities’. There are 1,525 SLBs with six different kinds of school spread across 34 provinces in Indonesia (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017).

Senior secondary school and vocational school

Vocational school (SMK) is provided for those who are interested in more applied, vocational learning. The programs of these schools are divided into several fields such as, information and technology, engineering, business and management, pharmacy, entrepreneurship, arts, tourism and farming. One school may offer several programs while others only one program. The curriculum and facilities in the vocational high schools are designed to support students to prepare for their future career. The content of the subjects in the classroom is focussed more on practice rather than theory.

In 2009, the government introduced a program named the *SMK Bisa* (Go SMK, You Can). This programme allowed vocational high school students to graduate with a diploma that certified that they could meet the needs of industry. The government's aim was to attract more students to study in vocational high schools so graduates from those schools have two choices; to continue their study in higher education or to move directly into employment.

Non-formal education

This type of school is provided by the government usually for adults who do not have formal qualifications. The program is called *Kejar Paket* (equivalency programs). This program is divided into three levels; A, B and C. The A level is equivalent to primary education. C is for those who would have equivalent education as lower secondary school. The *Kejar Paket C* is the program certifies the students as same as senior secondary graduates. The students who enrol in this program study three days a week. The length of daily study lasts between two to three hours per day. The program is usually conducted in the evening after 6 p.m. or during the weekend since most of the students are adult learners.

2.2 Assessment in Indonesia

If curriculum determines what matters to a society in the education of their young people, assessment is the means by which a society discerns how much and how well young people are learning and have learned (Wyse et al, 2018). Assessment can be used to support students' learning experiences and to report what has been achieved during the academic term (Harlen, 2007). Therefore, assessment is a central part of all education systems worldwide, including in Indonesia (Wiliam, 2011; ADB and OECD, 2015).

In Indonesia, there has been a tendency to have limited definitions of assessment. Although some of the legislation might be interpreted as having a focus on aspects of assessment to support learning - for example,, The Law Number 2 Year 1989 on Education National Standards states that assessment is intended to help the students' progress to achieve their educational goals -, other parts of the legislation define assessment as a process of collecting information to measure students' achievement (for example, the 2009 SNP Act). This focus on measurement was also present in the Act of Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture number 23 year 2016. Based on a survey conducted by SEAMEO in 2012 to compare student assessment systems in 10 Southeast

Asian countries, in Indonesia, assessment is defined as “a process of collecting and analysing information to assess level of learners’ achievement conducted by educators, a unit of education (schools) and government” (Gonzales, 2015: 41).

In terms of assessing the students, there are three assessment processes that students experience at school: school assessment, school-leaving examination and entrance examination. The following three sub-sections describe the processes.

2.2.1 School assessment

In Indonesia, assessment is commonly seen as a one-off summative event usually conducted at particular times in the school year: the end of each semester, the end of the academic year and the end of study. The assessment results of both semester and academic year are drawn together in a report book. Each student has their own report book that describes his achievement during the semester or year reported as scores. In the report book, the minimum score required for successful attainment of each subject is also included. Therefore, parents see whether their child/ren have gained the minimum average. This practice is intended to be consistent with Harlen’s (2007:16) contention that summative assessment provides “information to those with an interest in students’ achievements mainly parents, other teachers, employers, further and higher education institutions and the student themselves”. The results of yearly assessment are high stakes for students as they are used to determine whether the students can move to the upper level or whether they must repeat the level because their scores do not meet the minimum average.

2.2.2 School-leaving examination

At the final year (Year 6 of primary school, Year 9 of junior secondary school and Year 12 in senior secondary school) students must take the national examination “to determine the level of students’ achievement in key subjects” (Moegiadi and Jiyono, 1995:445). The government uses the examination as evidence of graduation. The Ministry of Education has commissioned the board of education national standard (BSNP) to be the administrator of the exam. BSNP is an independent institution responsible for the successful conduct of the national examination. The national exam is taken at the same time in every school in Indonesia and is compulsory for the third graders of both lower and upper secondary schools. The national exam period is divided into two examination periods taken by students in April or May. The first examination period is for the examination for senior secondary and vocational high schools. The

second period is for the national examination for students attending junior secondary schools. Both secular and Islamic schools in state and private institutions share the same examination papers.

2.2.3 Entrance examination

After the students have graduated from senior secondary school, they need to compete with other graduates in the National University Entrance Examination if they want to continue their study in state Higher Education in Indonesia. The Ministry of Education and Culture administers the admission test centrally. The test takes place in all state universities on the same day. The competition to be admitted to university is relatively high. In 2010, of the almost 450,000 upper secondary graduates who took the entrance exam, only 80,000 were successful in entering public universities (Clark, 2014). Legally, the 2012 of Higher Education Act number 12 states at least 20% of new students from the senior secondary graduates entering public higher education institutions should come from low income families.

2.3 National examination

National examination is a form of census assessment (OECD & ADB, 2015) administered by central government. They are typically used to determine whether individual students have satisfied the expectations of achievement at the end of a stage in their schooling, as a consequence of which they are deemed to have completed that stage and be eligible (or not) for a further stage of education or for employment. They are frequently seen as the primary basis for selecting students in pyramidal education systems where the number of places diminishes at each successive level. They are, thereby, the main vehicle for dispensing positional goods (Bangay, 2005), in this case scarce educational benefits. Importantly, they are an objective and unbiased way to allocate these benefits, although some have expressed concern that they may discriminate against some groups (Bedi & Garg, 2000; Stern and Smith, 2016). They can also be used to underpin changes in curricula and teaching methods, maintain national standards, and serve to hold teachers and schools accountable (Sulistyo, 2009; Ashadi & Rice, 2016).

The Indonesian government has held national examination in schools since the 1960s under various titles (*Ujian*, *EBTANAS*, *UAN* and *Ujian Nasional*). Based on the government law - UU number 20 year 2003 - since 2005 the national examination (*Ujian Nasional*) has been used as the quality control of education nationally. As

evidence that the students have graduated, the BSNP on behalf of Indonesian government runs the national exam.

The national examination is regarded as the primary means to assess students' learning achievement throughout Indonesia. The examination is run in the second semester around April. The scores gained in the national examination determine the eligibility of students to enter the next level of education. For those who are in Year 9 of junior secondary school, the subjects tested are Indonesian, mathematics, natural science, and English. Multiple choice test items are considered to be the best way to test thousands of students in one region. The student work is then marked by the local government by using computer system.

In conclusion, whilst some attempts have been made to introduce ideas of formative assessment in Indonesia, by far the greatest emphasis is on assessment for judgemental purposes, be that learners or teachers, schools or districts.

2.4 Teaching as a vocation in Indonesia

Teaching is now one of most highly desirable occupations in Indonesia (Chang et al., 2014). This evidence of Indonesia's tendency to see teaching as a highly desirable occupation was also recognised in the 2014 report from the World Bank (2014: 25) that indicated that "almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of higher education graduates working in the public services sector in Indonesia are employed in the education sector, mostly as teachers." Following the 2005 of Teacher Act, there are over 1 million students in 2010 majoring in education in universities in Indonesia while in 2005 there were only 200,000 students (Chang et al., 2014).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the government "built tens of thousands of new primary schools between 1975 and 1987 and rapidly hired and trained hundreds of thousands of new teachers" (Chang et al, 2014: 14). As the result of the expansion of the primary schools, the government experienced a shortage of primary school teachers in the 1970s. Therefore, teachers were recruited as soon as they finished their SPG (Jalal et al., 2009: 18). SPG stands for *Sekolah Pendidikan Guru* (school for teaching training) and is a vocational upper secondary school that provided a three-year primary teaching training. However, the Education Law of 1989 enacted a new standard for primary school teachers that required teachers to have a higher level of education, with a two-year diploma degree (D2). By the end of the 1980s, as a result of this law, the SPG no longer existed.

2.4.1 Development of teachers in Indonesia

In the 1990s, a new policy mandated English to be taught from the first year of junior secondary school and allowed it to be introduced as early as Year 4 at primary school (Lauder, 2008; Zein 2017). English was then also included in the primary school curriculum as a result of “the societal pressure demanding stronger foundation of English instruction at primary level in keeping with the demands of globalization” (Zein, 2016: 120). At that time, the demand for English teachers increased dramatically, “To carry out English pedagogy in these primary schools, there are 47,577 primary school English teachers appointed, of whom 41,304 teach in the public primary schools, whereas 6,271 teach in the private ones” (Zein, 2016: 120). To meet the new policy demands, some primary schools recruited university students (English major) who had not graduated to fill the shortage of the English teaching positions.

Profession	Salary / month (in Rupiahs)	
	Urban	Rural
Agriculture	3,341,094	4,467,884
Mining and quarrying	7,006,579	11,557,803
Manufacturing	6,584,032	5,953,643
Electricity and gas supply	6,152,593	6,364,752
Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	9,857,740	5,502,425
Construction	6,836,017	6,559,568
Wholesale Trade and Retail trade	4,319,415	4,631,124
Transportation and Storage	6,191,746	6,140,685
Accommodation and food service activities	4,677,252	4,488,078
Information and communication	7,329,365	5,964,675
Financial and insurance activities	5,671,653	5,944,409
Real estate activities	5,603,753	7,496,334
Business Services	6,145,672	6,159,912
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	5,038,435	5,043,286
Education	3,285,976	3,341,332
Human Health and Social Work Activities	3,957,413	5,134,262
Other Service Activities	3,496,736	4,127,452
Mean	4,417,217	4,587,783

Table 2-1_Salary average of net wage/salary per month of employee in 17 professions (BPS, 2019)

To encourage better qualified students to choose teaching as a career, a new program designed by the Indonesian government called a teacher certification program (*Sertifikasi*) was introduced (Chang et al., 2014). Since its introduction, there have been an increasing number of people who choose teaching as their profession since teachers either civil or non-civil servants have the same opportunity to be certified and granted a

professional allowance from the government. The allowance is double their monthly salary (Suryahadi & Sambodho, 2013). If the teachers teach in remote areas, they also may earn an additional special allowance (Evans et al., 2009). Table 2-1 shows the average employee salary in 17 professions in Indonesia. These changes led to, “the demand for admission to teacher training colleges” continuing to increase and being “the highest ever in 2013” (World Bank, 2014: 6). However, once teachers are in post, Suryahadi and Sambodho (2013: 6) suggest that “there is no clear career progression and professional development connected to a performance assessment system that links with financial rewards”. Indonesia has no well-defined instrument to measure the performance of teachers. The 2005 Teacher Act requires teachers to have a baseline qualification of an S1 (undergraduate) degree while previously having D2 (Diploma) would have been sufficient to enable an individual to become a teacher. The aim of the policy was to “ensure that all teachers in the system had minimum levels of defined competencies” (Chang et al., 2014: 97). It was also intended to improve the profession of teaching by extending ideas of quality “competency, academic qualification, certification” to include quality of life for the teacher, by paying attention to, “welfare, and status and rewards system for teachers” (Fahmi et al., 2011: 3).

2.4.2 Two types of teachers in Indonesia

Basikin’s (2007) reports that being a primary or a secondary school teacher could still be a post available to someone who has just graduated from senior secondary school. This is still common practice in Indonesia. The employment of uncertified teachers is “a major reason for the constant oversupply of teachers in the Indonesian school system” (Chang et al., 2014: 103). The Ministry of Education and Culture (2013) reported that from 429,261 teachers in Indonesia, 34,984 still had no bachelor degree as mandated by the Teacher Act. Schools are free to recruit non-civil servant teachers, many of whom are not qualified. Figure 2-2 below outlines the numbers of civil and non-civil servant teachers by Province.

No.	Provinsi Province	Status Kepegawaian / <i>Personnel Status</i>				Jumlah Total
		PNS <i>Civil Servant</i>	%	Bukan PNS <i>Non-Civil Servant</i>	%	
1	DKI Jakarta	19.187	45,61	22.884	54,39	42.071
2	Jawa Barat	144.575	59,36	98.988	40,64	243.563
3	Banten	34.930	55,03	28.548	44,97	63.478
4	Jawa Tengah	138.104	65,80	71.772	34,20	209.876
5	DI Yogyakarta	14.359	63,40	8.290	36,60	22.649
6	Jawa Timur	144.388	61,65	89.810	38,35	234.198
7	Aceh	32.132	61,31	20.277	38,69	52.409
8	Sumatera Utara	73.823	61,70	45.831	38,30	119.654
9	Sumatera Barat	34.521	69,94	14.840	30,06	49.361
10	Riau	30.244	55,70	24.053	44,30	54.297
11	Kepulauan Riau	6.635	48,63	7.008	51,37	13.643
12	Jambi	20.784	68,75	9.448	31,25	30.232
13	Sumatera Selatan	41.249	64,09	23.117	35,91	64.366
14	Bangka Belitung	7.786	80,27	1.914	19,73	9.700
15	Bengkulu	12.105	71,13	4.914	28,87	17.019
16	Lampung	40.206	66,08	20.635	33,92	60.841
17	Kalimantan Barat	31.622	71,43	12.651	28,57	44.273
18	Kalimantan Tengah	20.462	74,59	6.970	25,41	27.432
19	Kalimantan Selatan	24.402	72,40	9.302	27,60	33.704
20	Kalimantan Timur	17.298	64,32	9.597	35,68	26.895
21	Kalimantan Utara	4.141	67,80	1.967	32,20	6.108
22	Sulawesi Utara	14.873	69,65	6.482	30,35	21.355
23	Gorontalo	6.434	66,56	3.232	33,44	9.666
24	Sulawesi Tengah	21.567	70,16	9.174	29,84	30.741
25	Sulawesi Selatan	49.135	62,32	29.712	37,68	78.847
26	Sulawesi Barat	8.686	59,55	5.900	40,45	14.586
27	Sulawesi Tenggara	16.868	63,25	9.802	36,75	26.670
28	Maluku	15.531	81,33	3.566	18,67	19.097
29	Maluku Utara	8.905	75,23	2.932	24,77	11.837
30	Bali	20.570	71,32	8.270	28,68	28.840
31	Nusa Tenggara Barat	24.415	56,17	19.052	43,83	43.467
32	Nusa Tenggara Timur	34.390	59,13	23.772	40,87	58.162
33	Papua	11.184	60,83	7.202	39,17	18.386
34	Papua Barat	5.368	65,54	2.822	34,46	8.190
Indonesia		1.130.879	62,98	664.734	37,02	1.795.613

Figure 2-2_Number of civil servant and non-civil servant teachers in Indonesia (Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture, 2016)

The following two sub-sections discuss these two types of teachers in Indonesia: Civil servant teachers (PNS) and non-civil servant teachers (non-PNS).

Civil servant teachers

Bjork (2005: 96) describes the reasons why the civil service is an attractive option for Indonesian people; the career offers “job security, undemanding work, short work

hours, and lifetime employment.” Civil servant teachers are considered to have secure employment: they are entitled to work until they are aged 60. In their retirement, they receive a pension from the government. This type of teacher works in a state school. The range of benefits to be offered by civil-servant post has led “many of the best private school teachers’...to move to...’ public schools, even as contract teachers¹, with the intention of eventually gaining a post and then certification” (Chang et al., 2014: 33). However, the numbers of non-civil servant teachers who work in state schools has significantly increased since the government devolved money to schools as part of decentralisation (OECD, 2015).

Non civil-servant teacher

McKenzie et al. (2014) suggested that the government allowed schools to recruit this type of teacher since the government considered that devolved power meant that schools should have the right to do that. The government has no control over the numbers of this type of teachers hired at school (Chang et al., 2014). Currently, the school itself has the authority to recruit beginning teachers using school funding. The salary earned for those teachers is relatively low. However, there are opportunities for them to improve their qualifications once they become teachers in schools. Most new graduates from teaching institutions then can approach the schools individually and apply to be a teacher informally. This loose management structure seems to encourage schools to hire teachers who still have no bachelor degree - 34,984 of them were in post in 2013 (Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, 2013).

Decentralisation is still work in progress and not all the more highly qualified beginning teachers are employed in schools when they graduate. Current recruitment patterns in Indonesia appear more consistent with Basikin’s (2007) description of admission to the profession, where being a primary and secondary school teachers could be started as soon as the person graduated from senior secondary school.

The hiring processes undertaken in schools are not as rigorous as the civil service process. While the local government recruits civil servant teachers through a process of ensuring minimum entrance requirements (certain degree certificates,) accompanied by processes as taking entrance tests (Basikin, 2007), non-civil servant teachers are often recruited without any attempt to assess their skills and competences comprehensively.

¹ Contract teachers are “usually employed on a short-term basis, either by the school or the district government to meet teacher shortages” (Suryadarma et al., 2006: 404).

Non-civil servant teachers work in both state and private schools and although they earn “very little salary...the expectation of being recruited as a government employed teacher” appears to be enough to keep them in the profession (Basikin, 2007: 4).

2.5 Educational challenges in Indonesia

Although central government keeps trying to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, major challenges remain. In this section, some of the problems faced in Indonesia are considered in four subsections: (2.5.1) educational inequality, (2.5.2) unequal distribution of teachers, (2.5.3) corruption in local government and (2.5.4) corruption in schools.

2.5.1 Educational inequality

The geography and the population size of Indonesia present major challenges for educational equity. The first source of inequity lies in the difference between urban and rural settings. In big cities such as Jakarta, most schools have language, computer and science laboratories, while in almost all the schools in rural areas young people have no access to those laboratories. Schools in urban areas often have internet access, sufficient learning resources, musical instruments, highly qualified teachers, and buildings in a very good condition. In rural areas many young people will experience all subjects in the same classroom since the school buildings do not have the specialist areas or the necessary equipment. Some school buildings are not safe for the students to study and students in rural areas may also have a long and difficult journey to travel to get to school (Pramono & Marsisno, 2018). Students who study in well-equipped urban schools have access to better educational opportunities. Meanwhile although the students in rural areas may attend a school as is their right in the Indonesian Constitution, commonly the quality of that education is an issue of concern.

These differences may at least in part explain the international statistics on education in Indonesia. Compared to other Southeast Asian countries, Indonesia has much lower literacy levels (Diop et al., 2018).

2.5.2 Unequal distribution of teachers

The average student teacher ratio based on the 2004 Teacher Act is 1:20. It means one teacher has responsibility to manage 20 students. However, a further challenge for Indonesian society is that teachers are unevenly distributed throughout Indonesia (OECD & ADB, 2015). Some schools might have an oversupply of teachers while

others have a teacher shortage. These disparities amongst the distribution of teachers for schools are evident in different counties. Thus, some schools hire teachers to fill posts when there are an insufficient number of qualified teachers. An increasing awareness of the opportunities in teaching for qualified teachers has led to a situation where now pre-service teacher education in higher education institutions then become one of the most popular programs (Chang et al., 2014).

The 2005 Teacher and Lecture Act was introduced as an attempt to professionalise the teaching profession, to raise the quality of education by stipulating that all teachers in Indonesia should be certified within 10 years. This Act encouraged teachers to obtain the certification, however whether the certification has had the desired impact on the quality of teachers' performance is open to question. Some studies have suggested that the increased certification requirements had failed to improve the students' achievement (Fahmi et al., 2011). The World Bank & IPEA - Initiative for Public Expenditure Analysis (2008: 16) stated that the Indonesian government was also concerned that many allowances paid through the devolved financial settlement were "non-transparent, discretionary and prone to abuse" and the allowances seemed to have less than the intended influence on performance. Since the decentralization policy had been in action, schoolteachers had tended to focus "more on administrative issues than on the improvement of the classroom performance of teachers" (Chang et al., 2014: 92).

Problems in teacher recruitment in certain areas of the curriculum are particularly challenging. There are many cases in Indonesia where teachers teach subjects beyond those for which they are qualified. Kompas (2011) presents data from the Ministry of Education to demonstrate that there are 31.49% lower secondary teachers and 49.24% senior secondary teachers who teach subjects for which they are not certified. For example, a teacher who graduated from English major may teach Islamic religion as a subject at school. The major of study for which they have been certified through their Teacher Education does not necessarily equip them to teach in subjects beyond that.

By the end of 1990, the government closed schools of teachers training (*Sekolah Pendidikan Guru* - SPG) all over Indonesia. SPG was a school equal to that of a senior secondary school whose graduates could go directly into schools to practice as teachers. However, even today there are some teachers who only graduated from SPG and have no other formal qualifications. To tackle this problem, the government introduced a new law, Teacher Law number 14 in 2005, that recommends by 2015 all of teachers in

Indonesia must be certified and have a bachelor degree as a minimum qualification. This policy has led to a massive increase in enrolment in universities and colleges. However, the limited time that most teachers available to them for further study has pushed them towards Open University courses provided by the government. The student teachers are only required to take courses for a specified number of weekends and within four years then they can obtain a bachelor degree. Whether these programmes will be of sufficient depth to improve the quality of teachers is open to question.

In addition, there is a further complicating factor in education in Indonesia. Recruiting teachers based on their education and qualification background alone may not be sufficient to ensure a high-quality profession who are able to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the country, because obtaining qualifications may in some cases also be linked to corruption. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has defined corruption as "the misuse of public power, office or authority for private benefit — through bribery, extortion, influence peddling, nepotism, fraud, speed money or embezzlement" (United Nations Development Programme 1999: 7). For example, Chang et al. (2014: 183) shows that some teachers "got into the certification queue through political personal favouritism or outright bribery".

2.5.3 Corruption in local government

Based on Transparency International, the 2013 Corruption Index Perceptions put Indonesia in 114 from 177 countries. Even though the national government has allocated 20% of its budget for education, it does not necessarily follow that education will be served well. The possibility of corruption is high. To make matters worse, the risk for those involved in corruption of getting caught is low since corruption has been a common feature over time in education in Indonesia:

"The Indonesian Civil Service's weak disciplinary control is reflected in the difficulty in detecting corrupt behaviour among its members and the absence or light penalty for such behaviour" (Quah, 2003: 243).

Haryono Umar, Inspectorate General of Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia admitted that there are staff in the Regional Education Boards in Java Island who received payments from money that should be distributed to schools. No record is kept of these payments as the gratuities are considered as a thank you gifts for the staff who have helped the schools to earn the financial allowance from the government (Republika, 29/08/14). Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW) claimed that Indonesia lost around Rp. 1.3 trillion (£72.5 million = currency 15/10/2017) over the past 10 years

(The Jakarta Post, 2016). ICW also stated that weak controls in the education sector are directly related to the existence of corruption. Therefore, there are corruption activities in schools that had never been investigated. A major problem in the investigation of corruption practices in Indonesia is that such practices are unlikely to be documented (Robertson-Snape, 1999).

In 2014, 280 trillion rupiahs (Indonesian currency) was granted to the local government in every region in Indonesia as the financial award for education. This budget is intended to be distributed equally to every student at school under the BOS program. The school principals are required to provide annual expenditure report of the use of BOS to the local government. However, newspapers in Indonesia have repeatedly reported several cases of education officials taking a cut from the BOS transfer (Bonasir, 2011; Leandha, 2017; Elkana, 2018; Junaedi, 2018).

2.5.4 Corruption in schools

In Indonesia, the idea of teachers doing everything they can to help their students to pass the exam can be interpreted in ways not commonly found in the literature on washback. Schools and teachers are sometimes driven to extreme measures to help their students gain high scores in the national examination. I was not alone in having witnessed corruption in the national examination system, as outlined in Chapter One. Radiansyah (2013) wrote in her blog about how a teacher in Jepara, Central Java, witnessed a teacher distributing key answers for the students during the national examination. Meanwhile, Darmaningtyas (2014) reported that there were 70 principals and teachers in Lamongan, East Java, involved in stealing the question sheets for the 2014 national examination for secondary schools. A study conducted by Pandjaitan (2017) also indicated that 19 respondents in the questionnaire data gathering tool admitted that their teachers “came to the class, when the exam was being held, to give the answer keys in a small piece of paper” (p.41). The participants assumed that the school reputation was of such importance that it was acceptable practice for teachers to support them to cheat.

Since high-stakes tests such as the national examination in Indonesia are reported to put pressure on teachers and students (Sukyadi & Mardiani, 2011; Aprianto, 2013; Mukminin et al., 2013), the national examination might exert other negative influences on the teaching and learning practices of teachers in classrooms. The national examination may have led the teachers and the students to cheat, at least in part, because

its results were so important to learners, to teachers and to schools. My desire to know more about how teachers, pupils and parents perceived the experience of the national examination, its complex context and its impact on learning and teaching in classrooms, became my second reason for embarking on this inquiry.

Summary of Chapter 2

This chapter described the Indonesian education system and its assessment focus on national examinations. The chapter emphasised the constantly changing education system in Indonesia and the improvements that have been attempted in the various reforms, including changes to the aims of education and its content. The chapter explored the structure of the education system from pre-school to higher education and identified the major five types of schools: state, private, Islamic, schools for students with special needs and equivalency program. The chapter also considered the three main forms of assessment in Indonesia, namely, school assessment, school-leaving, and entrance examinations, as well as the dominance of the national examination.

The chapter considered the complexity of teaching as a vocation, currently seen to be one of the most highly desired professions in Indonesia and identified some of the issues emerging from Government policies to increase the numbers of teachers, for example, to teach English from as early as Year Four in primary schools. It highlighted the growing interest in professional development for teachers in Indonesia and explored attempts being made to raise the level of qualifications for teachers.

Although several efforts have been made to enhance the quality of the system, a number of major challenges were identified. This chapter outlined key problems in the disparity of learning resources between schools in urban and rural areas; the uneven distribution of qualified teachers; and some corruption practices found in Indonesian education.

In the next chapter, the literature review will be presented.

Chapter 3 : Literature Review

Overview

Chapter 2 presented the education and assessment systems in the Indonesian context. The chapter also explored the complexities of the national examination as part of the system. The nature of what it is to be a teacher in Indonesia was discussed, particularly their pathways to the profession, their professional development and the different types of teachers working in the country.

This chapter explores through a review of literature ideas that are central to this study. It begins by defining key terms that are crucial concepts in this study: *assessment, high-stakes testing, washback, feelings and perceptions* and *teacher performativity*. The chapter then focusses on high stakes tests and examinations in Indonesia and considers the complexities that emerge from approaches to assessment that are high stakes and the kinds of impact that commonly emerge - washback effects. This section presents a range of studies to exemplify the kinds of washback effect on teachers, students and parents that might be anticipated in a high stakes testing context. The theoretical frame for the study is explored and a gap in the literature is also considered. A summary is presented at the end of this chapter.

3.1 Defining key terms

This section defines key terms used in the study: assessment; high-stakes testing; washback; feelings and perceptions; and teacher performativity.

3.1.1 Assessment

Assessment has been part of the educational landscape for more than one thousand years. The origin of the concept is most commonly associated with China who started using formal assessment during the Sui Dynasty (581-618) by implementing Kējū, or Imperial Examination (O’Sullivan, 2012). The imperial examination was a test “to select officials for various ranks of the Imperial civil service” (Berry and Adamson, 2011: 7). Assessment can, however, now be seen as an integral part of learning and teaching process since it is process intended to provide information about students to support teaching and learning (Assessment Reform Group, 1999; Brown, 2004; Gipps, 2004; Black et al., 2009; Butt, 2010).

3.1.2 High-stakes testing

Cheng (2005: 43) defines a high-stakes test as one the results of which are seen by a number of groups including teachers, students and parents as “the basis upon which important decisions are made that immediately and directly affect the student”. In many countries internationally, results of a high-stakes tests are associated with future academic and employment opportunities. Madaus and Russell (2010) extend Cheng’s definition about high-stakes test stating that the results of the test may also have a significant impact on society and its educational system. A high-stakes test, they argue, has the potential to impact on teaching, learning and parenting practices.

The national examination in Indonesia, as the focus for this study is a high-stakes test since the results could influence students and teachers. Indonesian Government Regulation (2013) stated that the examination was to be used to determine the students’ graduation and their eligibility to enter the next level of schooling. A number of reputable schools in Indonesia can set a higher standard for the applicant to gain admission (Agung and Schwartz, 2007). The results of the national examination would then influence the academic future of the students. For teachers, Ashadi and Rice (2016) indicated that the national examination in Indonesia could influence the principal’s decision to allocate which teachers would teach the final year students. One of the school principals who participated in their study stated that the final year students should be managed by a senior teacher whom he and his vice principals believed the most capable in increasing the school’s performance in the examination. “Teachers who were not involved in teaching classes sitting in the national examinations felt this relegated them to a lower status in their school, negatively impacting on morale” (Ashadi and Rice, 2016: 736). ADB and OECD (2015: 307) indicate that “because teachers’ reputations, if not their pay, depend on how well their students perform in examinations, they may focus their efforts on the students who are most likely to succeed”. In this context, it might be expected that the test would have an impact on teaching and learning. This impact is commonly described as washback.

3.1.3 Washback

It is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by washback. This term is commonly associated with high-stakes assessment. The term ‘washback’ has appeared in literature about educational assessment for almost four decades (Broadfoot, 1980; Brown, 1981; Boyle, 1983; Morrow, 1983; Alderson, 1984; Britten, 1985; Applebaum & Taborek, 1986; Seaton, 1987; Buck, 1988; Mendelsohn, 1989). The term is defined

by a number of writers as the influence of a test on teaching and learning processes (Alderson, 1984; Alderson and Wall, 1993; Messick, 1996; Bailey 1996). However, alternative terms, some emphasising particular aspects of the impact of a test on teaching and learning, have emerged from other researchers; for example: measurement-driven instruction (Popham et al., 1985), distortion (Madaus, 1988), effects (Herman and Golan, 1991, Shepard and Daugherty, 1991 and Mons, 2009), backwash (Podromou, 1995) or impact (Klenowski and Wyatt-Smith, 2012).

One of the first to attempt to define the term ‘washback’ is Alderson (1984) who describes washback as an effect of a test on the teaching and the syllabus. He argues that tests can interfere with teachers’ capacity to teach the curriculum that they would wish to teach. Alderson and Wall (1993) develop the concept further, suggesting that washback distorts practice as “teachers and learners do things they would not necessarily otherwise do because of the test”. To exemplify this, they suggest that teachers use the test to have their students pay more attention to particular parts of lesson or place greater focus on the material likely to be tested (1993: 117). The washback effect might influence pedagogy in the classroom in various ways. Pearson (1988: 98) focusses on the term ‘washback’ as occurring when “public examinations influence the attitudes, behaviors, and motivation of teachers, learners and parents”. In the context of language learning, Bailey, (1996) suggests that, “tests run contrary to the principles and practices of current approaches to language learning” (p.259). Shohamy (1998) develops that idea and suggests that the context and structure of the language test can have a major impact on the teacher’s instruction.

The concept of washback has also been used to describe the influence of testing not only on teachers and students but also on individuals and groups who are involved less directly in the teaching and learning processes in classrooms such as parents, school principals, text publishers, test designers and policy makers. Hua’s (2006) definition, for example, includes groups beyond teachers and students. She identifies ways in which the washback effect affects all people involved in the testing experience. Her definition indicates that a high stakes test not only influences teachers and students but also all parties connected to the practice of the testing. For example, there may be a washback effect in young people’s home as parents, aware of the stakes leading from their child’s performance in a test, may put pressure on them to study what is contained in the test, or school principals who are concerned about the reputation of their school and know that

the reputation depends on test results may put pressure on teachers to focus on test success rather than wider educational aims and aspirations.

The exploration of what kinds of washback emerge in the Indonesian high stakes assessment (tests and examinations) context will be a major area for investigation in this thesis. Teachers', pupils' and parents' feeling and perceptions of the impact of high stakes assessment are a crucial part of this study.

3.1.4 Feelings and perceptions

VandenBos (2015: 416) argues that feelings are “subjective, evaluative, and independent of the sensations, thoughts, or images evoking them. They are inevitably evaluated as pleasant or unpleasant”. Reflecting on the impact of feelings arising from participation in a high stakes testing process, Smith (1991: 9) indicates that the results of high-stakes tests that can be accessed publicly can generate “feelings of shame, embarrassment, guilt and anger in teachers”. This study associates the term ‘feeling’ with the group participants’ experience and relationship between their emotional state and their experience of the national examination. This link between feeling and high stakes testing has been highlighted in a number of studies. All have argued that high-stakes testing does not only influence classroom practices but also the participants’ feelings (Alderson & Hamp-Lyons, 1996; Shohamy et al, 1996; Cheng, 1998; Friska, 2015).

Soanes and Hawker (2006: 754) define perception as:

“(1) the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses. (2) the process of perceiving something. (3) a way of understanding or interpreting something: ‘the public perception of him seems distorted’. (4) intuitive understanding; insight”.

Perception referred in this study might correlate with fourth definition of perception by Soanes and Hawker (2006) and Borg’s (2013) definition about teacher cognition. Borg (2013: 81) defines the term as “the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching – what teachers know, believe, and think”.

Teachers have responsibility in managing the learning and teaching environment in school; their perceptions, how they interpret their world, can have a significant influence on their professional practices (Goodson and Sikes, 2008). Exploring teachers’ personal histories, their background and their understandings of their own world has potential to understand their perceptions and the influence of their

perceptions on their day to day practices in the context of the national examination. How teachers perceive their world and the extent to which they perceive themselves to have agency within their classroom and school is a further key factor in this study.

Kagan (1992: 74) argues that:

“A teacher's knowledge of his or her profession is situated in three important ways: in context (it is related to specific groups of students), in content (it is related to particular academic material to be taught), and in person (it is embedded within the teacher's unique belief system).”

Kagan's argument suggests that the parameters of teacher agency are likely to be set by three aspects: context, content and personality. Context may refer to types of school, socioeconomic status of school and student, learning resources, students' academic and school geographical location. Meanwhile, curriculum and assessment might be included in content that could influence the teacher agency. On the other hand, 'person' is related to the belief the teachers hold. Pajares (1992) argues that a teacher's belief influences his/her perceptions and judgment and in the end, it will affect his/her behaviour in the classroom. Context, content and 'personality' are taken into consideration in exploring any washback effect of the national examination on Indonesian classroom practices.

3.1.5 Teaching performativity

Goodson (2003: 57) suggests that the teacher is “a central agent in the delivery of all versions of schooling”. However, agency is a complex concept, particularly in the context of national examination where the stakes are high not only for students' futures but also for schools' and teachers' futures. Teachers are considered as agents of change and professional developers of the curriculum (Priestley et al., 2015; Priestley & Drew, 2016). As a consequence of increased expectations of public accountability, many teachers may now work within cultures in which their professional practices depend on external definitions of quality, progress and achievement in the form of a high-stakes test.

The high stakes that accompany external testing have created a situation where teachers feel forced to improve their students' performance as demonstrated by gaining high scores in the examination rather than seeking to enhance student learning in relation to all that matters in the curriculum. Accountability systems often use evidence from test results that provide evidence on pupil achievement in some aspects of the curriculum as dependable proxy measures for the success or failure of a school and its teachers. For many, success or failure is judged solely by the result of national

examination. Busher and Cremin's (2012: 2) illustrate this point, explaining that in England, "school success is defined simplistically in performative terms of certain proportions of students in a particular school achieving particular grades, which places demands on teachers' work as well as on students". Situations such as this encourage a shift in the focus of the teachers' goal from developing the learning of young people as they progress in the curriculum to focussing on teaching to the test. This is washback. Stobart (2008) argues that high stakes testing commonly narrows the curriculum in the classroom to a focus on only the topics that would be tested in the test or examination. High-stakes assessments, Stobart (ibid) maintains, are likely to create pressure and anxiety on teachers that direct teachers to narrow the curriculum in this way.

The Indonesian national examination is one such high stakes test. This study aims to explore Indonesian teachers' perceptions of how the national examination influences their sense of their role as a teacher and their classroom practices.

3.2 Purposes of assessment

Understanding of the concept of assessment has evolved in recent decades. Black and Wiliam (1998: 2) use the term assessment to refer to "all those activities undertaken by teachers -- and by their students in assessing themselves -- that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities". Lambert and Lines (2000: 4) define the term as "the process of gathering, interpreting, recording and using information about pupils' responses to educational tasks". Black and Wiliam (1998) consider that teachers and learners are parts of the assessment process. In contrast, Lambert and Lines (2000) argue that assessment in practice appears to be a separate aspect of any teaching and learning process. They suggested that assessment can be taken "at the end of courses or modules, and marking is often taken home, to be done in the evening or weekend" (p. 2). It then indicates that it is only the teacher who is responsible for the assessment.

Assessment can be used to serve a wider range of purposes beyond modifying the teaching and learning process as argued by Black and Wiliam (1998). The use of information from assessment for purposes outside the immediate teaching and learning context has been the subject of much controversy, most notably when assessment evidence is used to assess the performance of teachers, schools and nations. Gipps (2004: viii) describes these wider purposes of assessment as: "for evaluating pupil performance and attainment including formal testing and examinations, practical and

oral assessment, classroom-based assessment carried out by teachers and portfolios”. He also shows that the assessment is aimed to “provide information about pupils, teachers and schools, act as a selection and certificating device, as an accountability procedure and drive curriculum and teaching” (p. 1).

The use of assessment evidence for a variety of purposes might seem to be a reasonable approach if considered from the perspective of each individual purpose. However, when these purposes combine in an education system, tensions can arise between competing purposes. The higher the stakes of the assessment evidence, the more likely the impact. Most commonly, high stakes assessment is linked with tests and examinations.

Many of the tensions described in relation to the impact of national tests and examinations may be linked with problems emerging from conflicting assessment purposes. Black (1998: 24) argues that it is necessary to fit the use of assessment “to the particular purpose which the assessment is meant to serve and a distinction has to be made at the outset between the purposes and the instruments and procedures that might be used”. The Assessment Reform Group (ARG), an internationally renowned group of assessment researchers, (Mansell, James, and the Assessment Reform Group, 2009) developed this idea and identified three main *purposes* for assessment in educational settings: assessment for learning (formative assessment), assessment of learning (summative assessment) and assessment for accountability purposes. Since the late 1990s, thinking about assessment has often continued to be based on a belief that there are different *types* of assessment, for example,, formative assessment (most often teacher assessment in classrooms), summative assessment (tests and examinations) and diagnostic assessment (in-depth assessment activities designed to diagnose problems). The ARG suggested that all *types* of assessment were simply ways of providing evidence, what mattered was the *purpose* to which the assessment was put. For example, if the purpose of assessment was to support learning, then evidence from a test or examination could offer insights into what a young person could do and what their most important next step might be. Assessment evidence, then, can serve different purposes. In this study, the three main purposes will be discussed separately: assessment for formative purposes, for summative purposes and for purposes of accountability.

3.2.1 Assessment for formative purposes

The concept of assessment for formative purposes was originally usually referred to as ‘formative assessment’. Bloom, Hastings and Madaus (1971) are amongst the first to have introduced the concept of formative assessment. They argued that assessment should not only be perceived as summative evaluations of student performance but also should include formative assessment in the teaching process. In formative assessment, teachers are expected to provide feedback for the students to scaffold their learning. This section seeks to understand the evolving concept of formative assessment. In doing so, the exploration is divided into three parts: the evolving definition of formative assessment and how thinking changed from different types of assessment to different purposes; how and why the language of formative assessment was changed in some contexts to become assessment for learning; and how some countries have attempted to develop their examination systems to reflect more recent thinking on assessment.

Cowie and Bell (1999: 101) use the term formative assessment as “the process used by teachers and students to recognise and respond to student learning in order to enhance that learning, during the learning”. A key factor in this definition is the focus on teachers obtaining information about learning progress during the learning process. It is assumed for the purposes of this discussion that learning is specified by a curriculum. Blanchard (2009: 139) stresses the formative element of the assessment process, as the assessment is concerned to make “judgments about how to take pupils’ learning forward”. A crucial part of this approach to assessment is that the teachers must have a clear understanding of how assessment information can be used to inform and improve students’ learning. The main focus of formative assessment as suggested by Butt (2010: 49) is that it provides a context to explore what is happening in the classroom, to know how the teachers and students interact and to reflect on how the teachers and students experience in the classroom practices. Klenowski and Wyatt-Smith (2014) develop this argument by stressing the importance of the relationship between self-image and success in learning. They argue that formative assessment can help the teacher to interact with the student “in ways that facilitate the student to re-imagine an identity as a successful learner through appropriate feedback and goal setting” (p.45). They suggest this more positive identity is essential to encourage students to make good learning progress in the classroom.

The term ‘assessment for learning’ (AfL) was firstly introduced in the 1980s and early 1990s as a parallel term to ‘formative assessment’. Stiggins (2005: 328)

distinguishes between formative assessment and assessment for learning in that formative assessment “tends to want more frequent assessment of student mastery of the standards themselves, while assessment FOR learning focusses on day-to-day progress in learning as students climb the curricular scaffolding leading up to state standards”. Assessment for learning is intended to support students’ learning by making it as an essential part of effective teaching and learning. The Assessment Reform Group (2002), defines the term AfL as:

“The process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers, to identify where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go to and how best to get there” (p.146)

The term assessment for learning is used by Jones et al. (2005: 5) to refer to “all about informing learners of their progress to empower them to take the necessary action to improve their performance”. Underlying both descriptions of assessment for learning are ideas of the use of evidence to inform feedback to inform action. Wiliam (2000: 9) underlines that the term ‘feedback’ has its origins in engineering systems theory, and was originally used to describe a feature of a system that allows information regarding some aspect of the output of a system to be “fed back to the input in order to influence future outputs”. Giving feedback is thus a central part of effective teaching and good feedback needs to be responsive to the needs of different students. Early thinking amongst assessment researchers saw the role of the teacher in feedback as the most important role: the teacher would decide what would be the focus for assessment, would evaluate the students’ works and determine areas that might require improvement.

Black et al. (2004: 10) developed understanding of feedback and its relationship with assessment to include a stronger focus on learners and on a different relationship amongst teachers and learners. They described AfL as an activity that “provides information that teachers and their students can use as feedback in assessing themselves and one another and in modifying the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged”. They highlight a more interactive approach to feedback as central to the enactment of AfL. Since AfL is seen as part of classroom interactions and observations it can be considered as an integral part of the learning process. Black (2006) exemplifies what he means by ‘observations’, “listening to talk, watching pupils engaged in tasks, or reviewing the products of their class work and homework”.

The concept of AfL as one involving multiple actors engaged in assessment practices, not only teachers but also students and their peers, has become a consistent

theme in more recent understandings of AfL. In the classroom, students are encouraged to reflect and respond through dialogue and demonstration with the purpose of enhancing the learning process. Willis (2007: 52) embodies the aim of AfL as to “improve student learning within the regular flow of teaching and learning through students becoming active meaning makers and thoughtful judges of their own learning”.

The allure of assessment for learning as a means of improving learning has proven attractive to both policy makers and practitioners internationally and many countries have attempted to build the model into their assessment systems and into their classroom practices. Scotland was one of the first countries to introduce AfL as part of a national programme “to rationalize and improve arrangements for assessment 3–14, with a view to putting in place an integrated and coherent system of assessment, with learning and the learner as its main focus” (Hutchinson & Hayward, 2005: 226). In Scotland, the innovative programme was called Assessment is for Learning (AifL) and was one where policy makers aspired to build an assessment system where “practitioners and schools are primarily accountable for learners and their families, whose involvement is recognized as crucial to the effectiveness of assessment to support and promote learning” (Hutchinson and Young, 2011: 63). The innovation was introduced in response to the previous curriculum and assessment programme, Education 5-14, that had tended to emphasize teacher-centred or test-centred approaches in the classroom (Whetton, 2009).

Two further innovative dimensions of AifL in Scotland are worth noting. First, the programme sought to bring together all three assessment purposes into a unified assessment system. Second, the design of the programme was based not only on research on assessment but on recognising that assessment change had to be managed; the process of programme development was designed using research on the management of change (Senge & Scharmer, 2001; Hayward, 2015)

Information gathered during evaluation of Assessment for Learning applied in Scotland showed considerable promise as an approach that could contribute to improving classroom practices. However, the depth of understanding needed to enact AfL in ways that would promote learning effectively proved challenging in the Western world and in the Asia-Pacific context.

Assessment for Learning in Asia – Pacific context

As indicated in the previous section, Assessment for Learning is now an international phenomenon, attractive to policy makers because of its promise of improved learning outcomes (Carless, 2005; Stiggins, 2005; Klenowski, 2009). The appeal of assessment for learning has led to developments in the Asia-Pacific region including in Australia and Hong Kong (Carless, 2005; Klenowski, 2011) although, as yet, with less impact in Indonesia.

In Australia, Klenowski and Wyatt-Smith (2012) have reported that the AfL approach in Queensland created an approach to assessment that was fairer than a single examination as NAPLAN. The previous examination was used as the only determinant of student achievement. Furthermore, they claim that AfL is “more accurate, and reflective of an individual’s learning and development, by identifying the skills and abilities being examined” (p.81). AfL, therefore, may provide dynamic practice spaces in which teachers can help the students evolve in life and learning. However, more recently the Australian government has used the results from international comparisons such as PISA and TIMSS to reform the curriculum and assessment system and much of the work that had been developed over more than thirty years in Queensland has been replaced by more traditional assessment approaches (Lingard et al., 2006).

In recent years, the potential of AfL in the classroom has been increasingly influential in curriculum policy statements in Hongkong. The government, working with researchers and practitioners, has sought to improve the quality of teaching and learning by reducing the excessive number of examinations and promoting AfL. From 2000 onwards, Hong Kong pushed ahead with a curriculum reform in which assessment is regarded as key for learning by introducing SBA (School-Based Assessment). Maxwell (2004) argued that SBA made use of a variety of assessment types in various contexts. There was a concern that standardized examinations administered by the national examination body had led to problems with the quality of education. “Because the stakes for success are high, teaching tends to focus solely on assisting students to pass the exams and on helping schools to get a good reputation” (Berry, 2008: 8). Hong Kong has attempted to reform teaching, learning and assessment through the implementation of AfL. Berry (2011: 207) suggests that the Hong Kong government believes that “SBA can bring about educational benefits to teachers as well as students, not only by helping to improve the validity and reliability of assessment, but also by creating a positive backwash effect on teaching”. However, she indicates that many

schools in Hong Kong still use more conventional approaches to assessment and do not use the information from assessment to improve teaching and learning activities.

The Indonesian 2004 curriculum was intended to scaffold “students’ ability in applying knowledge in real life situations and calls for teachers’ to use classroom-based assessment to support learning” (Berry, 2011: 97). Some Southeast Asian countries including Indonesia tried to introduce Assessment for Learning. They encouraged teachers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of students and also to use assessment information to modify the classroom practices. Gonzales (2015: 50) claimed that countries where formative assessment was emphasized, intended that AfL would “further improve student learning by performing assessment activities” during the teaching and learning practices.

Literature on Assessment for Learning suggests that the approach can lead to positive effects for both teachers and students (Stiggins, 2002; Brown, 2005; Jones, 2005; Hayward & Spencer, 2010; Taras, 2010; Hayward, 2015). The evidence suggests that assessment for learning can help students make significant gains in learning. It also can inform students and teachers about what the learning goal is, how far the students have achieved the learning goal, and what can be done to improve current performance.

However, the idea of improving assessment systems seems challenging across the world, especially for teachers. Weeden et al. (2002) illustrate five challenges for teachers in developing assessment for learning. The first is the challenge for teachers to clarify their understanding of assessment for formative purposes and how they can make changes to their teaching activities that will encourage the students to engage actively in their own learning and decide what they should do next. The second challenge is to understand that the teachers’ goal will have significant influence on students’ learning; this includes understanding how their strategies in agreeing learning goals might be more inclusive of the learners’ voice, since greater learner engagement will have a positive impact on students’ motivation and learning (Hayward, 2012). The third challenge is that some teachers report that assessment for learning is time consuming; they need to spend more time to give good feedback on their students’ work. This, however, is more than an issue of time. Hopfenbeck et al. (2015: 45) claim that the teachers need more time to “develop the skills regarding how to give detailed feedback to students who have different learning needs, ...use students’ feedback to adapt their own teaching...”. The fourth challenge is the teachers need to learn how to collect and interpret the students’ work formatively. The final challenge is the fact that

such change takes time and needs support from stakeholders and policy makers. “Change does not happen overnight and teachers need to be able to experiment and share ideas and find out what works for them in their context” (Weeden et al., 2002: 29). There appears still to be some way to travel before AfL is enacted in practice internationally.

In Asian contexts further challenges emerge. AfL may not motivate students to learn due to their cultural beliefs about assessment in countries where traditionally assessment is always associated with grades and marking (Carless et al., 2006). Ho (2015) claims that students also “maintain an inherent belief that assessment is the sole responsibility of the teacher or that they lack the ability to accurately assess their own performance”. Such views of assessment have to be addressed if AfL is to make a positive impact on learning.

Changing Assessment Cultures

Transforming assessment practices cannot be accomplished instantly. Promoting Assessment for Learning amongst all stakeholders takes time and careful, well-informed planning. The examples offered in this section, where Scotland, Australia and Hong Kong have tried to develop assessment for learning approaches in their schools and classrooms, indicate it is not easy to adopt new approaches. However, if stakeholders and government share similar objectives to improve the learning experiences of young people, it is possible to achieve. Successful implementation of AfL requires a strong commitment from policy makers and active participation of all stakeholders including parents, employers, teachers, researchers, and students, and a recognition of the different cultural contexts within which new assessment practices will emerge. Importantly, the innovations have to be adequately resourced and time made available for all those involved to be part of the development process. (Hayward & Spencer, 2010).

While assessment for formative purposes is considered as a dynamic process in relation to learning, assessment for summative purposes is more likely to influence the learners’ perceptions of themselves as successes or failures in learning and impact on their evolving identity and self-concept. The next section will explore ideas of assessment for summative purposes and its variety of uses for different stakeholders. Examples drawn from five continents (Europe, America, Australia, Africa and Asia) of how assessment for summative purposes emerges into practice will also be examined.

3.2.2 Summative assessment or Assessment of Learning

While assessment for formative purposes is generally focussed on improving learning by providing feedback for students and teachers, assessment for summative purposes are generally administered to measure how much learning has taken place. The older term ‘summative assessment’ and the more recent ‘assessment of learning’ are related as they all imply a similar philosophical principle of using assessment as judgement, often linked to certification. Therefore, to gain an insight into assessment of learning, it is important to review definitions and understanding of this concept. The two terms are used in this discussion reflecting the language of the authors referred.

Timing is a common feature when identifying the extent to which assessment is used summatively. Desforges (1989: 7) states that assessment for summative purpose is used to summarize “a pupil’s achievement at the end of the course”. Evidence for this can be collected over the learning process or by conducting a test or an examination at the end of a course which samples the learning that has taken place (Black, 1998).

Weeden et al. (2002: 29) defines summative assessment as “a snapshot judgment that records what a pupil can do at a particular time”. It relates to learning goals that are expected to be achieved over a period of time. Newton (2007: 156) simply characterizes the term summative as “a type of assessment judgement”. Although both definitions do not describe explicitly when summative assessment is administered and what kinds of activities can be regarded as summative assessment, they provide a foundation for a variety of subsequent interpretations of summative assessment.

The features of summative assessment are varied in accordance to “the use of made of that assessment, and also according to whether it is marked by the teacher of the pupil who is being assessed, or externally” (Mansell, James, and the Assessment Reform Group, 2009: 12). Blanchard (2009: 139) illustrates that summative assessment varies in the ways in which evidence is collected: “informal observation, conversations, and surveying written output, artifacts and recorded performance”.

High stakes testing of students is widely used internationally at different points in school systems. In England, for example, secondary school students sit a General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), an external summative assessment at the end of the compulsory period of education when young people are sixteen. The purpose of the GCSE is to “to provide students and parents with individual feedback and for school accountability purposes” (Isaacs, 2010: 325). National tests are a feature

throughout the educational journey of young people in England at points referred to as Key Stages. There are two occasions of testing; at the end of Key Stage 2 for 11-year olds and of Key Stage 3 for 14 year olds. Collins et al. (2010) describe its internal and external purposes:

“Internal purposes typically include the monitoring of individual progress over time using National Curriculum levels of attainment to inform pupils and their parents. External purposes include monitoring the performance of schools and local authorities” (p.274)

A slightly different approach of high stakes testing can be seen in Malaysia. Lan Ong (2010) reports that there are four external public examinations administered at the end of each level of schooling. The result of the examinations, Lan Ong suggests, are “a passport to employment and the certificates are seen as controlling entry into privileged jobs” (p.94). The results of those examinations are also the currency used for access into further and higher education, including applying for scholarships.

Ideas of success and failure of schooling for individuals may be perceived by the stakeholders to relate to the score gained in high-stakes assessment. The results of a summative assessment that tells the students their grade encourages students to focus on that rather than on how the information from the test might provide help with later learning. A summative assessment is “a rite of passage, an end in itself, that merely certifies their learning performance at that time” (Weeden et al., 2002: 31). The high stakes involved in the use of test scores to determine students’ futures, therefore, may lead teachers to focus on teaching to the test and students to learn to the test.

However, the picture becomes even more complicated when tests and examinations are used for purposes beyond summing up the learning of individual learners.

3.2.3 Accountability

Two purposes of summative assessment are proposed by Harlen and Gardner (2010): monitoring the progress of individuals and that of groups of students. The results from assessment of an individual can be used to monitor the student’s progress and provide information to report to parents. It also can provide evidence to be used as currency for the student’s future. However, the result of summative assessment for groups of students can be used to evaluate the performance of the teacher or the school. This information may also be used to inform third parties, for example,, parents, future teachers or employers (Blanchard, 2009). In addition, Harlen and Gardner (2010)

suggest that the results emerging from groups of students may also be used by stakeholders beyond the school for accountability and monitoring purposes. When assessment evidence is used for accountability purposes, the results can be used to evaluate the teachers and the schools. Assessment evidence can also be used for monitoring purposes to compare students' achievements "within and across schools in particular areas, and across a whole system for a year-on-year comparison" (p.16). However, Klenowski and Wyatt-Smith (2014: 27) argue that such approaches may lead the school to "focus only on the results in the evaluation of school performance".

The importance afforded to the results of high stakes tests and examinations continues to permeate the culture of most schools as they seek to get the best results possible (Barskdale-Ladd & Thomas, 2000; Kohn, 2000; Lingerfelter, 2003; Black & William, 2005; Nichols & Berliner, 2007). Getting good results for students is an admirable aim but, when schools also have to provide evidence to the public about their examination results, washback occurs. League tables of schools are pored over by parents who use league tables as a determinant of quality. Yet, placing in a league table of examination results relates more commonly to the social context within which schools are situated. Black (1998: 31) argues:

"A school working with pupils of poor educational background in an area of social deprivation where parental support is limited may be producing results which are below a national average but which, in the circumstances of that school, represent an outstanding achievement. Thus, data on the achievements on intake of the pupils, and on the catchment area and the pupils' home backgrounds, will also have to be considered in making any judgment or taking any action on assessment results. More generally, a wide range of data are needed if the achievements of the pupils in any one school are to be interpreted".

When assessment is used for accountability purposes the evidence can be seen as an external measure of school performance. Assessment results are also perceived to be an indicator of the performance of teachers, schools and the education system. Mansell, James and the Assessment Reform Group (2009: 17) argue that "when assessment results are used for accountability, they can inform judgments on the effectiveness of particular teachers, subject departments, schools, local authorities, the government, other institutions, policies, and on national education systems as a whole".

Information from assessment can also be used to monitor and evaluate the current national education system. Assessment can also be used to indicate particular strengths and weaknesses within schools and indicate what action might be taken by the policy

makers to handle the issue. However, these data rarely take into consideration important factors such as schools in different social circumstances, issues that are central to a meaningful understanding of educational accountability if it is to have a role in improving the system. The position is further compromised by, in many accountability data collection systems, a lack of consideration being paid to other features. Lambert & Lines (2000) argue it will be unrealistic to expect that a school whose students use English as a second language and/or are refugees will have same performance as “a school where children came from backgrounds built on stable personal relationships and homes filled with televisions, computers and books” (p.100).

There is also a belief that under the pressure of accountability, “teaching well is incompatible with raising test scores” (Wiliam et al., 2004: 50). A teacher who focusses more on students’ scores might pay less attention to for example,, higher order skills or developing critical thinking among students. The over-emphasis on testing scores for accountability has been claimed to negatively influence teaching and learning practices (Alderson, 1984; Biggs, 1998; Assessment Reform Group, 2002; Black & Wiliam, 2005; Klenowski, 2011). The demand internationally for school and system accountability has led to pressure to improve, and to be seen to improve, education systems while the approaches taken to the use of data for accountability purposes are likely to be “the biggest impediment to achieving that improvement” (Black & Wiliam, 2005: 260).

If a country focusses too strongly on assessment for purposes of accountability, there is a tendency that assessment turns learners into numbers because it “provides a label for people which falsifies the reality of the individual, a reality which is inevitably more complex” than what is shown in the score (Alderson, 1984: 9). In England, the national assessment for Key Stage 2 is considered as a test vital to the external construction of the school’s reputation. Therefore, the Year 6 teachers are aware that they are responsible to help the students achieve good results. A survey carried out by Day et al. (2007:10) showed that teachers felt “there was a strong sense that the need for ‘paper evidence’ related to assessment and, more general ‘accountability’ information was one of the most negative aspects of teachers’ work”.

In some contexts, and cultures, the accountability stakes are very high. For example, assessment may affect teachers and principals when the results are used to determine payment or dismissal. Berry & Adamson (2011: 11) indicate that in the United States one implication of the No Child Left Behind policy is that “assessment to

demonstrate that the students are meeting the required standards has become essential in determining the financial survival of a school, leaving many teachers fearful of the consequences of experimenting with alternative approaches". The schools may be granted rewards or extra funds if their students' scores increase or they face the threat of closure if the scores remain low.

In Indonesia, school accountability is closely connected with results from the national examination, where these examination results are considered a key indicator of the effectiveness of teachers. The Indonesian Education Law Number 20 year 2003 put a strong emphasis on the role of the national examination in holding schools accountable. The ADB and OECD (2015: 314) reports that "the fear of national exams scores being used for making judgements about schools, cities or provinces is one of the key factors sustaining systemic cheating and maladministration, as shown by the unrealistic average scores of some cities and provinces."

School principals and teachers focussing more on the impact of assessment results on their practices may lead to a classroom culture that is less engaging for both teachers and students. Aprianto's survey (2013) given to 19 senior secondary school teachers in Mataram, Nusa Tenggara Barat, discovered that "the pressure on the teachers that the students must succeed in National Exam made the teaching-learning process dull and tiring" (p.111). The survey data would have been enhanced, had the researchers included classroom observations. Observation of classroom experience can provide "powerful insights into classroom practice" (Hopkins, 2008: 85).

Darling-Hammond (2004) argues that rewarding or punishing schools for having certain test scores will create a distorted view of accountability. There is evidence that these kinds of distortion have led to a number of washback effects. First, schools may manipulate student examination entrance to ensure that students less likely to succeed are not included in the schools' statistics. These issues are now in the public domain. For example, Morrison (2018) wrote in an article in Forbes magazine that:

"Ofsted, England's school inspectorate identified 300 schools with high levels of off-rolling, with students who were on the register at the start of Year 10, aged 14 disappearing by the beginning of Year 11, aged 15.

And just last week it emerged that more than 10% of one school's roll had left in just nine months".

Off-rolling is the term used to describe the process where pupils seen as unlikely to perform well are advised to leave and attend another educational establishment. A

lack of job security may also lead highly qualified teachers to choose to teach where the students are easier to teach, and the school is perceived to be stable. Darling-Hammond (2004) reported teaching staff in United States by the end of 1990s as less likely to risk losing rewards by teaching in a place where performance is low. Consequently, this may lead to students in areas of disadvantage where performance may be lower being taught by inexperienced or under-qualified teachers. Darling-Hammond (2004: 1059) emphasizes that giving such sanctions to schools that have lower performance measures in test penalized disadvantage students twice: “having given them inadequate schools to begin with, society now punishes them again for failing to perform as well as other students who attend schools with greater resources”. Ultimately some higher attaining schools may focus more on eliminating students who are likely to perform less well in high stakes examinations than on improving schools.

3.3 National examination in the Indonesian context

Indonesia has had national examination since 1950s and these are used to measure students’ achievement at school. Until 2014, every final year student at primary and secondary school had to pass the appropriate national examination if they were to graduate. The examination for each level of schooling is still regarded as the only reliable way to compare education quality across the country. Chapman and Snyder (2000) argue that the national examination offers “a means of comparing large groups of individuals at relatively low cost per person” (p.457). The large population in Indonesia creates a particular challenge for the Government who regard the examination as a practical way of examining a large population.

In 2015, the new Indonesian Minister for Education and Culture introduced a further new policy for the national examination system (Linggasari, 2015). The scores achieved in the exam would be no longer reflected as the only factor used to decide whether or not a student would graduate. The school would determine its own students’ achievement. The mode of examination was also radically altered. There would no longer be a paper and pencil test as an online version of the national exam would be launched in 2015. This represented a new approach to testing the students. This computer-based exam was initially implemented in 540 secondary schools (Sundaryani, 2015). Other schools retained paper and pencil tests as in previous years. The next phase of this policy proposal was the government’s intention to introduce this computer-based exam across the country. Even though the national exam is no longer the determining factor in the graduation, the on-line scores are used by universities as the

basis of admission decisions for final year senior secondary school students wishing to enter university. This means that despite the change in policy, the test stakes remain high. There are opportunities for students to take a second test if they wish to attempt to raise their score in the national exam (Yudiawan, 2017).

The examination is taken by students in Year 6 of primary school, Year 9 of junior secondary school and Year 12 of senior secondary school. For those who are in junior secondary school, the subjects covered are mathematics, natural science, Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesia language) and English. The government requires the students to have an average score in the national exam at least 5.5 and no lower than a score of 4 in every subject tested. Detiknews (2013) reports that the total scores that determine whether the student graduates or not is comprised of two parts; national exam (60%) and school examination (40%). Since the national exam accounts for 60% of the graduation grade, it means that the national exam remains a high-stakes test. If students score below the average, they have two options. First, they may re-take third grade in junior secondary school and take the national exam again the next following year. Second, they could follow *Kejar Paket B* (equivalency program).

The *Kejar Paket B* is a program that is equal to junior secondary school and is run by the government. Those who join the program take an equivalent exam administered twice a year in July and October. A certificate shows the students has taken the exam will be given. This certificate is considered to be comparable to the certificate from junior secondary school and allows students to continue their study in senior secondary schools.

The average score gained by all students in one school in the national examination is also determined the standard of the school itself. This accountability measure is based solely on student scores; the higher the score the students gain the higher the rank the school will achieve. Harlen (2007) argues that high-stakes assessment can be intended as a “sole measure of the effectiveness of teachers, schools and the system as a whole”. The situation might be significantly different when the assessment results were only used to measure the students’ achievement and what they had known” (Mansell, James, and the Assessment Reform Group, 2009). Teaching therefore will inevitably focus on what will be tested in the national examination- ‘washback’.

3.4 The nature of the washback effect

Not all washback is negative. There is some evidence to suggest that students are motivated to study harder if they know the future of their study is at stake. Mons (2009: 11) states that “testing influences student behaviour by increasing the motivation to study” since repeating another year or having to take a second test is not perceived to be an attractive option for students. Therefore, it is argued students work harder to make sure they can gain at least the minimum score needed to graduate the school-leaving examination. The more public the reports of accountability, the more stressful it is likely to be for teachers, students, school principals and parents. The example offered in the previous section was from schools in England, but this is an international phenomenon. In reflecting on the washback effect of testing in the USA, Barksdale-Ladd & Thomas (2000: 386) argue that:

“School-by-school, district-by-district, and state-by-state comparisons published in local newspapers coupled with tremendous pressure to produce high test scores from administrators, school boards, and state legislators make testing the focus of teacher thinking about instruction.”

The high-stakes of the test led the teachers to focus on test preparation with less concentration on the other aspects of teaching and learning such as curriculum design. Gaining high scores in the test is the main priority for the teachers in their teaching activity. However, Baker et al. (2010: 1-2) claim that “...although standardized test scores of students are one piece of information for school leaders to use to make judgments about teacher effectiveness...” there are other factors that influence students’ scores. Some possible factors include what support students have from their parents, the resources available to the school and the students’ wider learning experience inside and outside the classroom. These are factors beyond the teacher that may also impact on the students’ score in the national examination.

3.5 Previous studies on washback

The effect of high-stakes test has been used to investigate the influence of testing not only on the teachers and the students but also on the individuals and groups who are involved indirectly to the teaching and learning processes such as parents, school principals, text publishers, test designers and policy makers. There has been a growing awareness that high-stakes test can have consequences beyond the classroom. Such test may also create a significant impact on wider society. This section presents a number of studies that involved three elements (teachers, students and parents) that might be affected by high-stakes test.

3.5.1 Washback effect on teachers

As previously illustrated, washback emerging from high-stakes testing can have a major effect on teachers' thinking and practices. The evidence suggests that there are a number of reasons why teachers prefer to teach to the test than to teach based on the curriculum designed. Madaus (1998) concludes that one factor may be linked to teachers' perception that wider society perceives the scores gained in high-stakes summative tests as the major goal of schooling. Consequently, the teachers may construct their concept of what it is to be a professional to reflect what they perceive to be the demands of their society.

Washback is an international phenomenon. In China for example, Qi (2004) conducted a research study to investigate the effect of NMET (National Matriculation English Test) on teaching. There were 388 senior English teachers from 180 secondary schools in Guangdong and Sichuan provinces took part in the study. More than 90% of the teachers indicated that the NMET test influenced the content of their teaching. The teachers reported that they spent more time rehearsing practices that would prepare students for the test and that every class lesson would be concerned with a topic from the test.

In 2011, Tsagari interviewed 15 teachers in Athens to identify the washback effect of FCE (First Certificate in English) exam on the teaching practice. The findings showed that the teachers "focussed exclusively on preparing students for the requirements of the exam" (2017: 437). The FCE exam was claimed to have a negative effect on the teachers since the results of the exam were also used for purposes of accountability, as a means to judge their effectiveness as teachers. This experience led to increased levels of stress and anxiety amongst the teachers since they perceived that their professional reputations were at stake.

As the sole criterion in deciding if learning was successful in schools in Pakistan, the exam results had a substantial influence on the teaching practice. Reporting on a study undertaken in 12 schools in Pakistan using classroom observations and interviews, Ahmad and Rao (2012) concluded that "the teachers' main consideration for teaching is not the knowledge or practice of the use of language in real life situations, rather how to memorize well and prepare exam capsules" (p.179). Teachers are likely to be pressurized to help the students pass the exam. If there is a student who failed in the exam, it is considered the teacher's fault. There is a common view that "the

quality of education is profoundly determined by the quality of the teaching” (Suryahadi and Sambodho, 2013: 5). The teacher in Pakistan is seen as the most important person to build education quality in the nation. Therefore, most people identify teachers as “nation-builders and community leaders” (Suratno, 2014:3).

Previous studies on the impact of the high stakes examination on the education in Indonesia have been conducted and attempts to shift the assessment culture towards one where Assessment for Learning plays a greater part have been explored. However, Sulistyo (2009: 21) asserts that the teachers who participated in his study “are not fully ready to conduct classroom-based assessment”. The study does not offer insights into why this was the case. Sulistyo’s study did not use interviews as a source of evidence which might have offered a better opportunity to explore the reasons behind the teachers’ statements. Lichtman (2012: 195) suggests that in in-depth interviews “participants can share what they know and have learned and can add a dimension to our understanding of the situation that questionnaire data or a highly structured interview does not reveal”. The current study will use interviews to collect evidence.

These studies reinforce evidence presented previously in this chapter of the impact of high stakes testing. It demonstrates that the washback effects show remarkable similarity in very different international contexts.

3.5.2 Washback effect on students

The importance of analysing the washback effect of high-stake assessment on students is also an issue of concern worldwide. Green (2006) studied the impact of academic writing of IELTS on the students. He collected questionnaire evidence from 108 students who were from mainland China who took IELTS preparation classes. The participants were currently staying in the UK and planning to enrol in UK universities. The results indicated that the students had two objectives in taking the class: to obtain good grade in IELTS and to prepare for studying in university. He suggested that “the teachers and courses might have been influential in shaping washback to the learners” (p.131).

In the Chinese context, Luxia (2005: 155) examined “the factors that played a role in shaping the intended washback” of NMET (National Matriculation English test). She used in-depth interviews and questionnaires to collect data from stakeholders including 986 third year senior secondary school in four districts in one of the provinces in China.

One of the findings showed that the main priority of the students to learn English subject was to gain high score in the NMET.

A further study investigating the washback effect of the NMET on the English learning was conducted by the Xiao et al. (2011). They analysed evidence from questionnaires from 89 third year students who were about to sit the NMET. In the follow up interview with eight students, the study suggested that the participants preferred to practise the test papers to prepare for the NMET. Some students in the interview expressed anxiety that they might not be able to answer the questions in the NMET as the questions might be taken from the most difficult part of the curriculum material they had. The interviews also showed that the students' three-year study "had been devoted to NMET preparation" (p.117). Xiao et al. (2011) concluded that the NMET had a negative impact on students since the school was providing repetitive test practice throughout the third year. However, participants found the practice helpful in improving their language skills since the revision materials focussed on the subjects that would be tested in the test.

In Hong Kong, Cheng (1998) designed a comparative survey to explore the relationship between the HKCEE (Hong Kong Certificate of Education English Examination) and the learning processes. HKCEE was a new model of examination initially introduced in September 1994. The questionnaire responses revealed that the students had even more exam preparation than usual to allow them to adapt to the new exam. The students had mixed feelings about the examination; "on one hand, they did not think examinations were an accurate reflection of all aspect of their study" while on the other hand they believed that they had to be well prepared to gain high scores in the examination (p.296).

Drawing on evidence from a study undertaken in Indonesia, Sulistyo (2009) suggested that "there is a strong wish to conduct classroom-based assessment, which necessarily implies more demands on teachers' roles, responsibilities, and accountability on assessing their students' learning progress and achievement". Aprianto (2013) concludes that the teachers in Indonesia "wanted a better test system in assessing students' competences" (p.112).

Listening to students' perceptions of their experiences of high stakes assessment is an under investigated area of research in Indonesia. Bell (2005: 162) argues that there is merit in involving students in focus groups where "The intention (and the hope) is that participants will interact with each other, will be willing to listen to all views,

perhaps to reach consensus about some aspects of the topic or to disagree about others and to give a good airing to the issues which seem to be interesting or important to them” This study will include focus-groups as part of the research design to offer students an opportunity to express their views about the impact on them of the national examination.

3.5.3 Washback effect on parents

There is a strong evidence base to demonstrate the impact that high-stakes testing has on teachers and students. Some researchers posit that high-stakes testing leads to greater teachers’ and students’ anxiety. However, there is little systematic evidence on how parents respond to the power of testing or the ways in which they attempt to support their children through high stakes testing. This is particularly true for research undertaken in Indonesia.

Pearson (1988) states that “public examinations influence the attitudes, behaviors, and motivation of teachers, learners and parents, and, because examinations often come at the end of a course”. Parents’ perceptions may affect students’ attitudes since they both interact within school and home environment. However, parents may have different perceptions about the influence of the testing on their practices. Parents may also employ different methods to prepare their children for the high stakes test. Twenty parents who were interviewed by Barksdale-Ladd & Thomas (2000) in southern states (SS) and northern states (NS) in the United States show differences in their approach to helping their children to sit a standardized test. Their findings indicate that:

“The SS parents discussed helping their children with homework throughout the school year, but they did not engage in any particular academic activities with their children to prepare them for test taking. The SS parents did not take an active role in preparing their children specifically for the test. However, because there are professionally prepared materials that mirror the NS test, there were NS parents who coached their children to do well on the state tests” (p. 394).

The studies above suggest there is a potential impact of high-stakes testing on parents. Parents may engage in different practices to support their children through the testing process. However, they are aware the impact of the testing on their parenting and on their children’s learning.

However, not all parents support the idea of high stakes testing. For example, a study conducted by Shepard & Bliem (1993) reported that the parents who participated

in their study believed that evidence on their children's progress provided by the teachers was more than enough information to support their children's learning and to provide information to them as parents.

3.6 Assessment, theories of learning, and the relationship between assessment and teaching and learning practices

Assessment theory has conventionally been located in the measurement domain emerging largely from psychometric theory. Assessment of Learning, particularly when set in a high stakes context, is established with a purpose to impact on the experience. High stakes tests build washback into their design. They are intended to stimulate attention to the test, its contents and to the test as an event, for example, to encourage students to study (Baird et al., 2017). Assessment as a feature of the educational landscape can be seen as linked to what Foucault (1975) referred to as the power of normalisation, where individuals put themselves forward to be judged by society. Education is not the only domain where the power of normalisation is evident. In *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison*, Foucault (1975: 304) draws comparison between, prisons, factories and schools:

“We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator judge, the ‘social worker’-judge; it is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based; and each individual, wherever he may find himself, subjects to it his body, this gestures, his behaviour, his aptitudes, his achievement.”

It would be possible to argue that high stakes examinations are part of a system that seeks to keep students working hard and docile, recognising that the examinations they are taking serve a crucial gatekeeping function for their futures in society (Howard, 2008). This is a form of washback. In education, the intention of high stakes assessments to stimulate washback is based on an understanding that practice will increase performance and that if tests are high stakes, students will be encouraged to rehearse for the test and improve their performance. This makes educational tests different from, for example, psychological tests, where tests are designed not to have an impact on performance that is linked to rehearsal. For example, practising for an IQ test should not lead to an increase in IQ score.

As a teacher, the function of examinations is more than the sorting mechanism to which Foucault refers. Examinations, high stakes or not, represent one way of gathering assessment information to identify how much and how well young people have learned what the curriculum has identified as being important. The problems of

washback when set in this educational context have been discussed earlier in the chapter. In this section, the focus is to explore the theoretical link between assessment and learning. In principle, assessment and learning should be inextricably linked. The Assessment for Learning phenomenon discussed early in this chapter almost takes that for granted. However, how assessment relates to theories of learning is an area that has received insufficient attention (Black, 1999). Baird et al. (2017) propose an idealised model to show the relationship between learning theory and assessment theory. In this model there are reciprocal effects between assessment theory and learning theory (see Figure 3-1).

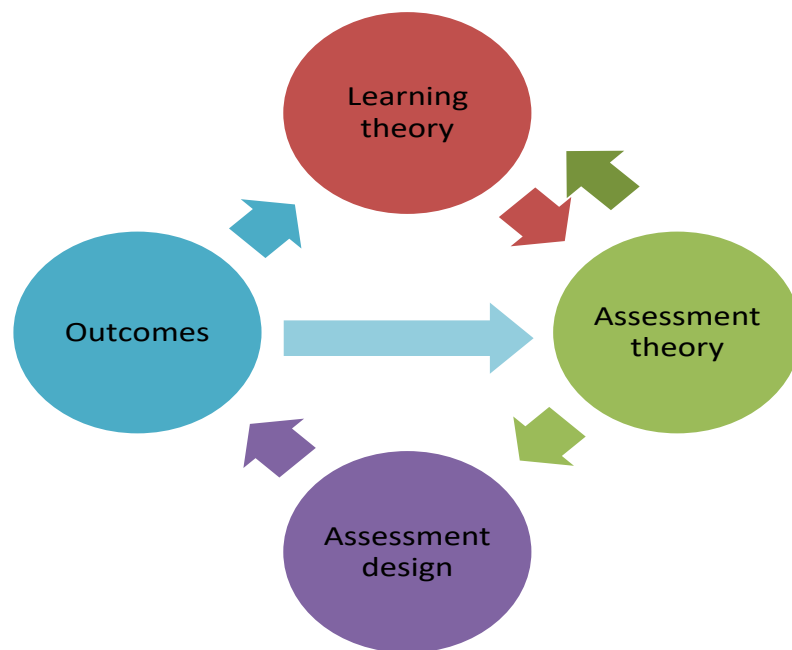


Figure 3-1_Idealised relationships between learning and assessment theories (Baird et al., 2017: 318)

Substantive theories of learning are commonly divided into three strands: behaviourist theories, cognitive theories and socio-constructivist theories. Each of these three major sets of theories can be linked with different aspects of assessment.

Watson (1913) is believed to have first used the term ‘behaviourist’. He formulated behaviourism based on the study of stimulus-response relationship. In behaviourist theories of learning, “achievement in learning is often equated with the accumulation of skills and the memorisation of information (facts) in a given domain, demonstrated in the formation of habits that allow speedy performance” (James, 2006: 54). Assessment in multiple-choice format is considered to be aligned in this theory of learning. Black (1999: 120) states that “a test composed of many short, ‘atomized’, out-of-context questions, and ‘teaching to the test’” are examples of behaviourist theories in

action. Both James (2006) and Black (1999) argue that tests such as these pay no attention to processes of thought; their only focus is on outcomes. The national examination administered in Indonesia is then likely to have a close association with behaviourist learning theory that emphasises on question and answer stimuli.

The second set of learning theories; cognitive theories are identified by Haladyna & Rodriguez (2013:29) as “the dominant paradigm for assessment systems currently”. Haladyna (2004: 20) argues that cognitive learning theories provide treatment of student learning “from the identification of content and cognitive process, principles of instructional design, and principles of assessment involving diagnosis and remediation, among other aspects”. Learning according to cognitive theory occurs when there is an active engagement of learners and its process is determined by what is happening in people’s head (James, 2006). In a later publication in 2008, James suggested that an increased focus on cognitive theories of learning had led to changes in approaches to assessment, for example, when students in an examination were awarded marks for adopting the correct strategy even if the strategy did not result in a correct answer. A further change in assessment practice linked to cognitive learning theory is a trend that as the emphasis upon cognitive learning theory is increased; this transition is followed by the requirement for assessment to test higher order thinking skills (Baird et al., 2017). Assessment such as classroom dialogue, open-ended questions, thinking-aloud protocols and concept-mapping that blends together context of teaching and assessment towards the goals of learning are examples of assessment in cognitive theories of learning (James, 2006).

Social constructivists theories, that are most often associated with Vygotsky (1978) suggest that learning is a process where learners create knowledge within the context of their social environment (Baird et al., 2017). Social constructivism gives “a high priority to language in the process of intellectual development” (Pritchard, 2009: 24). In these theories of learning, learners cannot be separated from their social environment. Formative assessment like feedback from peers, and student self-assessments is included in socio-constructivist approach (Shepard, 2000). Social constructivism considers that the role of teachers as a reflective agent is “dependent on sensitivity and accurate knowledge of each child's needs” (Pollard, 1990: 252). The move towards greater levels of authenticity in assessment, where assessment is integrated into the learning environment, emerges from socio-constructivist theory.

Approaches to assessment such as reflective journals, peer assessment and portfolios often claim to have links with socio-constructivist theory.

The relationship between assessment and theories of learning is difficult to trace and there remains much work to be done before the relationship between assessment and learning is adequately theorised. Traditionally, the assumption has been that assessment as it has emerged in its more recent, more complex forms has been inadequately theorised. However, Borsboom (2006) suggested that the difficulty lay at least in part to weak substantive theories.

3.7 A gap in the literature

Literature, as indicated earlier in this chapter, has recognised the existence of strong relationships between assessment and classroom practices. Investigating the impact of assessment on teaching and learning known as ‘washback’, when the washback is unintended, is a continuing concern among educationalists, researchers and policy makers. Washback effects can be seen in the impact that a test can have on approaches to teaching and learning, for example, where the curriculum is narrowed to focus on the content of a test (Bailey, 1996:259, Shohamy, 1998, Fulcher and Davidson, 2007). This review of literature has indicated that high-stakes testing is commonly perceived to have a negative influence on the teaching and learning processes. A number of studies carried out in Asia reported negative washback effects arising from high stakes assessment. A study conducted in Sri Lanka, Alderson and Wall (1993: 126-127) concluded that “the examination has had a demonstrable effect on the content of language lessons”. The effect shown was that language classroom practices focussed more on the areas that were most likely to be tested. Likewise, Cheng (1998) noted that the content of teaching had changed after the introduction of the revised exam, reading aloud being replaced by role play and discussion activities, for example, reflecting the new exam content.

A number of research studies have been carried out to explore this phenomenon in Indonesia (Sukyadi & Mardiani, 2011; Aprianto, 2013; Mukminin et al., 2013; Ngadiman & Tirtaningrum, 2015; Saukah & Cahyono, 2015; Sundayana et al., 2018). However, there is little evidence of these research inquiries paying attention to the washback effect of a high-stakes test that combine the perspectives of teachers, students and parents. In order to address this gap, this study included three groups of participants: teachers, students and parents. This study is designed to deepen

understandings of the washback effect in an Indonesian context where specific aspects of culture play a significant role by exploring perceptions of the three groups of participants within the context of the national examination and to identify their perceptions of its impact on their practices.

Summary of Chapter 3

This chapter defined key terms in this study, reviewed literature on assessment relevant to this study and identified factors that are seen to affect the enactment of high stakes assessment internationally including in Indonesia. The chapter explored assessment through the lens of assessment purposes and presented evidence on the kinds of washback that can emerge when assessment evidence is used for conflicting purposes.

The chapter presented research to consider the impact of high stakes tests on teaching and learning practices. The review also explored the complexity of washback effects involving the impact of a range of sociocultural factors. The theoretical frame for this study was presented. Finally, the chapter identified a gap in the literature as a purpose for a further research in this field to be undertaken in an Indonesian context.

The next chapter will discuss the methodology for this study. It will describe the researcher's epistemological and ontological assumptions provide a description of the research design and the methods used to collect the data, the sample and how the data were analysed. The chapter will also present the results from the series of exploratory studies undertaken before the main data collection.

Chapter 4 : Methodology

Overview

Definitions and issues regarding assessment, high-stakes testing, and washback have been presented in Chapter 3: Literature review. That chapter also provided some information on some studies that have been conducted to investigate the washback from high-stakes testing in different contexts, including Indonesia. Key themes that have been developed by a number of researchers were highlighted to make connection with the themes that emerged in this study.

This chapter outlines the reasons for the decision to use a case study approach to explore perceptions of teachers, students and parents regarding the national examination and the impact of the examination on their practices. Qualitative research is chosen to explore these three research questions: (1) How do teachers, students and parents in Indonesia perceive the impact of the national examination? (2) How does the national examination affect teaching and learning practices in final year classrooms dominated by the national examination cycle? (3) How might students' experiences in the national examination year be improved?

Before the main study, two pilot studies were carried out to refine these data gathering tools; the results of the pilot and its impact on the main study are outlined. Two data gathering tools, individual interviews and focus group discussion, are explored. The next section presents considerations that led to the selection of sites and participants. Ethical issues emerging in this study are next noted in this chapter. The next section discusses the approach taken to analyse the data gathered. The last section presents a short summary of the chapter.

The following six sections consider consecutively the study's research approach, its case study design, pilot phase, influence of the pilot on the main study, data gathering tools, ethics and data analysis.

4.1 Methodology: Embracing an interpretive case study approach

Newby (2010: 51) states that research methodology is "concerned with the assembly of research tools and the application of appropriate research rules". This study explored teachers', students' and parents' perceptions of the impact of the national examination on their practices. McNamara (2000: 73) argues that "the power of tests in

determining the life chances of individuals and in influencing the reputations of teachers and schools means that they can have a strong influence on the curriculum". If the teachers and students had initially focussed on what would be tested, their preparation for the test may well simply have focussed on achieving the desired results. This could in part be due to the perception by stakeholders of potential consequences for the school of not achieving those results. For example, students gaining low scores in the test could make the school less popular. Despite a wealth of research that has investigated the existence of washback effects, "researchers in the field of language education still wrestle with the nature of the washback" and with how to "reduce the negative washback" of testing (Cheng, 2008: 358). By investigating washback in the Indonesian context, this project seeks to contribute to the existing literature and research field.

In carrying out a research inquiry, a researcher is guided by a paradigm: a set of assumptions and beliefs. Paradigms can be described as formed of four elements: assumptions about social reality (ontology), about how we come to know (epistemology), about the nature of values and worth (axiology) and about research methods.

This research is designed to examine and question the nature of a certain phenomenon or reality (national examination), in the context of Indonesia. It is imperative to understand how teachers, students and parents engaged with the power of the national examination and its influence on their practices and perceptions. Students, parents and teachers may believe that success or failure in learning is indicated by the score gained in the examination. They may perceive that score to be an accurate indicator of how students have mastered the materials taught or not. However, if they believe that a positive outcome in the examination was not an indicator of significant learning then it may result in "resentment and damaged relationships among students, parents, and teachers" (Wormeli, 2006: 18).

This study does not adopt a positivist stance in which participants are considered as objects and sources of data to be used to test a hypothesis. Positivist assumptions result in a belief that one can know the truth based on results as "a rigid principle or law, an abstraction or generalization that leads to a theory, information, or both, that are used to predict or control human behaviour or natural forces" (Krampe, 2004: 107). Instead of perceiving the participants as objects, this study believes that the participants are subjects who are each unique and different one from another. This study aims to understand the uniqueness of humans who have divergent perceptions, adopting an

interpretive paradigm to explore the stakeholders' beliefs about the phenomena under investigation. Stake (2010: 36) argued that "interpretive research is investigation that relies heavily on observers defining and redefining the meanings of what they see and hear". With this epistemological assumption, conducting a qualitative study allowed the researcher to get as close as possible to the participants being studied. In doing this, personal background of teaching may influence the way in which the data were interpreted and the way in which positions as an insider or an outsider in this inquiry were considered (Creswell, 2012). Seeking the beliefs and perceptions of experiences held by students, teachers and parents suggested that an interpretivist approach (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Eisner, 1991) would be most appropriate in addressing the study's research questions.

4.1.1 Qualitative research and researcher positionality

Creswell (2012: 206) states that "in qualitative inquiry, the intent is not to generalize to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon". The results of this study will not be generalizable to the entire population studied. Nonetheless, they might offer valuable insight into participants' perspectives of the national examination.

Bryman (1988: 61) stated that the most essential characteristic of qualitative research was "its express commitment to viewing events, action, norms, values...from the perspective of the people who are being studied". As a result, qualitative methods were appropriate for understanding the nature of the washback effect on teaching practice. They also enabled the researcher to identify useful information about teachers' views regarding the power of the national examination and of assessment for learning. Merriam and Tisdell (2016: 15) state that the researchers who carry out qualitative inquiry are "interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed." Furthermore, Lichtman (2012: 9) emphasizes that:

"Qualitative research is a way of knowing that assumes that the researcher gathers, organizes, and interprets information with his or her eyes and ears as a filter. It is a way of doing that often involves in-depth interviews and/or observations of humans in natural and social settings."

Silverman (2000: 8) recognized that "the methods used by qualitative researchers exemplify a common belief that they can provide a 'deeper' understanding of social phenomena than would be obtained from purely quantitative data." A qualitative researcher studies a phenomenon in detail, gaining in-depth knowledge and

understanding about the chosen topic. It has been highlighted that “the number of individuals you study is not critical; rather, it is the nature of the study and the degree to which you explore complex in-depth phenomena that distinguishes qualitative research” (Lichtman, 2012: 22). This qualitative study offered an effective means of understanding the nature of the washback effect and how the three participating groups involved (teachers, students and parents) perceived the impact of the national examination on them in their personal and/or professional capacities.

Creswell (2012) noted that a central phenomenon is the main concept to be explored in a qualitative study. This study required an exploration and understanding of the students’, parents’ and teachers’ perceptions of the impact of the examination on their activities. Qualitative researchers share an understanding that they can present a deep understanding of social phenomena by “looking at things in their natural settings or talking to individuals about a particular topic or investigating individuals who have experienced a particular phenomenon” (Lichtman, 2012: 33).

Investigating as an insider how participants perceived the washback effect of the national examination on their practices could provide informed means of exploring why and how things happened. As Hannabus (2000: 103) noted, an insider researcher:

“knows his/her environment well, knows by instinct what can be done and how far old friendships and favours can be pressed, just when and where to meet up for interviews, what the power structures and the moral mazes and subtexts of the company are and so what taboos to avoid, what shibboleths to mumble and bureaucrats to placate. They are familiar with the organisational culture, the routines and the scripts of the workplace.”

The researcher’s personal experience and social background influenced the intentions of this study. Holding an English education program undergraduate degree and experience of teaching English informed an insider view of the issue under research. Having been an English teacher in a primary school and in a cram school for two years each and a university lecturer who taught in English education program for over four years also allowed readier access to teachers, as most of the English teachers who participated in the study were alumni of the university where the author worked. Mercer (2007) claimed that access was more easily granted to an insider researcher because of familiarity. She also argued that insider researchers would “have a better initial understanding of the social setting” (p.6) because they were familiar with the context and they recognized the subtle and diffuse links between situations and events. The advantages of being an insider in this study were having ready access to

participants and having effective relationships with them. Another advantage was the ability to use personal knowledge and understanding to gain more intimate insights into the study. The shared background between researcher and participants could also permit the sharing of ideas and opinions during the data collection.

Goodson and Sikes (2008:25), however, warned of the challenges which can arise from carrying out research in a familiar background, since it may “have unintended consequences with implications going far beyond the data” being collected. An insider researcher needs to be reflexive, able to recognize her own bias and able to identify possible biases in the participants’ stories. Asselin (2003: 100) stated that researchers’ own experiences and beliefs could prevent them “from achieving a detachment necessary for analyzing data objectively.” Furthermore, Sikes and Potts (2008: 7) observed that in insider research the researcher might fail “to maintain a distance in order to be able to take a clear and an unbiased non-partisan approach”.

As this study adopts an interpretive qualitative inquiry, the data gathering tools are intended to interrogate how teachers, students and parents viewed the national examination. Since this approach seeks not only to describe a phenomenon but also to explain possible reasons for it, interpreting how the teachers, parents and students perceived the importance of the national examination and how it affected their teaching and learning practices was required.

As test preparation was likely to occur in the classroom in the second semester, this period was selected as the focus for data collection.

4.1.2 Case study approach

Yin (2009) states that the choice of research approaches depends on the research questions a researcher proposes. If the questions emphasized the investigation of a discrete social phenomenon (i.e. the national examination), a case study approach might be the most relevant. A case study with multiple participants was used to illuminate the impact of the national examination within the area of Bandung, a suburban council in West Java, Indonesia. The aim was to carry out the case studies in the junior secondary schools in one of districts in Bandung within a relatively short and specific time frame for evaluation purposes. This research limited data collection to a particular geographical area: the subjects lived or worked within one county in Bandung. The boundaries of this study, delimiting who might potentially be invited to participate included: a) the 18 junior secondary schools in this one county; b) English teachers who

taught final year students in these 18 junior secondary schools in the county; c) final year students in these 18 junior secondary schools in the county; and d) parents whose children were final year students in these 18 junior secondary schools in the county. As Stake (2005: 3) claimed that “a qualitative case study is developed to study the experience of real cases operating in real situations”, this study would investigate the participants’ perceptions and current practical experiences relating to the bounded topic.

This study aimed to explore teachers’, students’ and parents’ perceptions of the national examination and its impact on their practices within the junior secondary schools in the district. It also explored teachers’ alignment of the curriculum with their teaching. A part of this study also aimed to understand what participants believed would improve students’ experiences in the national examination. The case study approach adopted allowed the researcher to “get under skin of a group or organization to find out what really happens - the informal reality which can only be perceived from the inside” (Gillham, 2000: 11).

The case study approach could also provide a number of advantages to the research process, as the researcher could explore the experiences of “a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles” (Cohen et al., 2007: 253). In previous investigations, it was suggested that high-stakes tests may influence classroom practices, with the consequences that teachers tended to teach to the test and that students tended to learn to the test (for example, Shohamy et al., 1996; Green, 2006; Qi, 2007; and Tsagari, 2017). Conducting a case study could provide evidence for a deeper understanding of a particular situation and what influenced the outcomes of that situation. This study aimed to explore in-depth potential distortion resulting from the national examination within the Indonesian context. Exploring the perceptions of teachers, students and parents could provide valuable findings concerning the influence of any washback effect due to the national examination on junior secondary schooling. This research investigated how people were personally affected by the national examination in a particular context.

4.2 Piloting

Wilson and Sapsford (2006: 103) define a pilot as “a small-scale trial before the main investigation, intended to assess the adequacy of the research design and of the instruments to be used for data collection”. The purpose of piloting was to develop and

refine the data gathering tools of the main study. After reviewing relevant literature investigating washback of high-stakes testing, classroom observations, individual interviews and focus group discussion were considered to be the most appropriate tools for the purpose of piloting. The pilot consisted of two phases. The first pilot included classroom observations and individual interviews with teachers, while the second added individual interviews with school principals and parents and focus group interviews with students.

4.2.1 First pilot study

To assess the appropriateness of the chosen research methods, a pilot study was conducted in a small-scale population. The aim of this study was to understand teachers' perceptions of the influence of the English national examination on their teaching practice. Focussing only on English teachers who taught at junior secondary schools in Bandung was designed to provide an initial insight into the experiences of teachers.

Three research assistants were employed to carry out the first pilot study in the beginning of 2015. Recruiting the research assistants allowed the researcher to remain in the United Kingdom to continue the review of previous washback studies conducted in different contexts. As time and access to overseas flights were very limited, having the research assistants offered an opportunity to gain some data in the first phase of the pilot. The research assistants had two roles; doing classroom observations and interviewing English teachers in three junior secondary schools. The pilot study was considered low risk, as the focus was on teachers' perceptions.

As each teacher participating in the pilot was under the management of a particular school, a letter containing a permit access request was sent to the principals of the three schools involved before the pilot study began. After permission was granted, the research assistants conducted classroom observations and individual interviews in the chosen schools. These observations and interviews were designed to explore how the teachers viewed the influence of the national examination and its impact on their teaching practices.

Classroom Observations

One classroom observation was conducted in each of the three junior secondary schools that participated in the first pilot. During the teaching observation sessions, an

observation proforma was completed to inform about the materials the teachers delivered and the methods they preferred for teaching the students. The teaching activities were video-taped; however, the length of video-taping varied depending on the research assistants' judgement of the extent to which the observation proforma had covered the teachers' activities. The research assistants video-taped the teachers while they were teaching to acquire information about content, teaching materials, instruments, methods and assessment styles that they applied during their classroom activities. The videos taken in this pilot study were uploaded to a personal cloud storage service (Dropbox) that only the research assistants and author could access with a password.

Each observation was carried out for up to seven minutes in each school. Video-taping of classroom observations was used to record what the teachers emphasized in their practice before the students faced the national examination. The aim of the observations was to record whether the teachers based their teaching on the syllabus they had or whether teaching was based on exam preparation. Since the observations only examined teaching activity, a camera was set up in the middle of the classroom facing only the teacher. Most of the time, the activity in the classroom was teacher-centred, with the teacher as the sole facilitator, usually standing in front of the classroom delivering material.

Individual interviews

Two of the three teachers who participated in the classroom observations were selected to take part in an individual interview on the basis of gender. The teachers (one female and one male) from a state school and a low-cost private school were interviewed to explore their priorities when teaching final year students at the junior secondary school. The interview questions addressed the impact of the national examination on their teaching practice. The questions were the initial draft of the questions intended to be developed for the interviews in the main study. Interviews lasted approximately 15 minutes for each teacher. To facilitate ease of conversation and clarity of communication, the interview was conducted in Indonesian. It was determined that this would enable the teachers to freely express their views without being concerned about working in a second language.

4.2.2 Second pilot study

In October 2015, a second pilot study was conducted at two junior secondary schools (one state school and one medium-cost private school) in the same district as the first pilot study. The schools selected were different from the first pilot study, but gender was again considered. Research assistants no longer participated: it was assumed that this pilot study could be conducted more thoroughly with the researcher directly involved in the process. The purpose of the second pilot study was primarily to examine the influence of the national examination on teaching practice and to continue refining the data gathering tools to be used in the main study. The first pilot study indicated that gathering data from the teachers alone might not be sufficient to answer all three research questions of this study. The second pilot study therefore included school principals, parents and students.

This pilot study involved one school principal, two English teachers, 52 final year students and two parents. Two school principals were visited to ask their consent to do classroom observations, individual interviews and focus group discussion at their school. Information about the purpose of the study, the length of time and the methods used to gather the data was explained to the school principals. Since the piloting involved students below 18 years old, a parent/guardian consent form was delivered to the students. The students returned the form, signed by their parent or guardian, indicating that the parents agreed to their children's participation, before they could participate in the study.

Classroom observations

The observations took place across three weeks in October 2015 at two junior secondary schools. It was the teachers who decided which class would be involved in the observations. The decision was based on the availability of the teachers to be observed. The state school teacher decided to choose a class containing 12 students. In the private school 40 students were observed in one class.

The purpose of these observations was to assess the classroom practices in detail in the second semester of the final year of schooling, and to refine the data gathering tools and researcher skills. In using classroom observations, the study focussed on exploring how teachers modify their teaching strategies and materials with regard to the national examination. Two cameras were set up in each classroom; one was placed in the corner of the room to capture the whole classroom, and the other was focussed on

the teacher alone. Two meetings up to 90 minutes each were recorded in each school. The observations concentrated on the teaching materials used in the classroom, the teaching methods, and the teachers' remarks regarding the influence of the national examination on their teaching practice.

Individual interview with school principal

Given the limited time, only one school principal was interviewed as part of the second pilot study. The school principal was asked to reflect on his priority for the final year students and how he encouraged the teachers to prepare for the national examination. Though he had been a principal for more than ten years, he had been principal of his current school for only four years. He talked about his main priority being to build the character of the students: "It will be useless if you gain high scores in the national examination, but your attitude is bad". He also stated that he did not put any pressure on the teachers regarding the national examination, as "they know best".

Individual interviews with two English teachers

English teachers from both schools were interviewed individually in sessions that lasted 30 minutes. The interviewer took some written notes during the sessions, which were also audio-recorded. The interview questions were designed as an initial draft of questions that could be raised in the interviews in the main study. For effective communication purposes, the interview was conducted in Indonesian.

Individual interviews with parents

Teachers contacted parents and asked them to participate in an interview. Two parents (one male and one female) agreed to be interviewed at school. The interview was conducted to explore parental involvement in children's learning activities. An audio recorder was used to record the interviews, which lasted approximately 30 minutes each.

Focus group discussions with students

Five students from each school were chosen randomly by their teachers to take part in a focus group discussion. The questions focussed on the students' perception of and preparation for the national examination. The focus groups were video-taped and lasted up to 25 minutes each.

4.3 Impact of the pilot studies on the main study

The pilot studies were intended to test the validity of the data gathering tools and were an important step before starting data collection for the main study (Cohen et al., 2007). The individual interviews with school principals were withdrawn. Although individual interviews with school principals had seemed to provide an appropriate avenue for data collection, limiting the data gathering tools to classroom observations, individual interviews with teachers and parents and focus group discussions with students could allow for a clearer focus on the findings in the main study. Constraining the data collection in this way allowed a greater number of participants to take part and more insightful data to be gathered.

4.4 Main study: The site, participants and data gathering tools

Cohen et al. (2011: 195) explain that in the context of qualitative inquiry, triangulation is intended to “explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint”. The standpoint of this study is that the data are gathered from three different participating groups that could be expected to have different perspectives. Triangulation is featured in this study by seeking data from groups of teachers, students and parents.

In the main study, data were collected from February 2016 to the end of May 2016. Approaching the school principals and asking to conduct the study in their schools was the first action to be taken. The purpose of the study and the methods of data collection that would be used were then explained. School principals were told that individual interviews with English teachers and parents would be conducted, as would focus group discussions with final year students. After the school principals agreed, they appointed the English teachers for interview. After a teacher was contacted and agreed to participate, the interview was set up at a time that suited them. In four of the eight schools that agreed to take part in this study the English teachers and the school principals were asked to select up to nine students to be involved in the focus group discussions. This decision was taken because they had sufficient information about the students to recommend participants with a range of genders, academic achievement and socioeconomic backgrounds. The parents invited for interview were also chosen by the school principals and the English teachers, taking into consideration a request that the economic status of the parents should be varied, to allow investigation of how parents of different economic status viewed the national examination.

4.4.1 The site and participants of the study

At the time of data collection (2016), there were 75 public and 217 private junior secondary schools in Bandung regency (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016) providing continued education to young learners after they graduated from primary school. The research setting was a single district located in Bandung. The district was selected as the researcher was quite familiar with the area and expected to have no difficulty in gaining access to the participants. Purposive sampling was used to invite the participants to be included, based on the researcher's judgement regarding the characteristics of participants needed (Cohen, 2000). The selection criteria used to invite participants were: (a) their willingness to participate, (b) a mix of gender, and (c) a range of backgrounds (i.e. teaching experience for the teachers, occupation for the parents and learning results for the students). These selection criteria were used to ensure access to a wide range of perspectives. The purpose of the study is to explore the experiences of teachers, students and parents who might be influenced by the national examination.

There were 18 junior secondary schools in the district where this study was conducted. Three of them were state schools and the other fifteen were private schools. The private schools in the site selected included low, medium and high-cost private schools. Three of the schools were excluded due to limited time and difficulties of access. To gain access and approval from the schools, the other 15 out of the 18 junior secondary schools were personally visited. The addresses of the schools were obtained from the reference data of the Ministry of Education and Culture (2016). During the initial school visits, the purpose of the study was explained to the principals and their permission was sought to conduct the study in their schools. The principals of all the 15 schools agreed that their schools could participate. However, some of the potential teachers were not willing to participate in the individual interviews for certain reasons. Three teachers ended up cancelling the interviews, as they claimed they had limited time teaching in the second semester, and four other teachers did not respond when contacted by telephone and text through the mobile numbers provided by the schools. Eight junior secondary schools in the county participated in the main study, which illustrates Cohen's (2007: 109) observation that "there are very many reasons that might prevent access to the sample, and researchers cannot afford to neglect this potential source of difficulty in planning research". Individual interviews with eight English teachers (six females and two males) were finally carried out, and the teachers' pseudonyms are listed in Table 4-1 below.

Individual interviews	
Teachers	Gender
Endang	M
Fera	F
Husna	F
Indri	F
Mahmud	M
Nopi	F
Putri	F
Siti	F

Table 4-1_List of teachers (pseudonyms) participating in the main study

Out of eight schools participating in the main study, only four agreed to take part in the focus group discussions. The four schools who refused to ask their students to participate in focus group discussion shared a common reason: their students were busy preparing for the national examination. Focus groups were then carried out in four schools representative of a range of school types, including one public school, one low-cost private school, one medium-cost private school and one high-cost private school (see Table 4-2 below). The discussions allowed for an in-depth examination of the students' perceptions of the national examination and its washback on their learning practices.

Focus group discussions	
School	Number of participants
Armadillo (State school)	9
Savannah (Low-cost private school)	8
Pleasant Hill (Medium-cost private school)	6
Millennium (High-cost private school)	6

Table 4-2_List of schools (pseudonyms) in which there were focus groups participating in the main study

The four teachers were also requested to select parents with a range of occupational backgrounds to give an opportunity for the expression of differing views. Within the limitations of time and access, ten individual interviews were conducted with parents (seven mothers and three fathers), assessing their perceived impact of the national examination on parenting practices. Three mothers whose children studied in the public school were interviewed, as were one mother from a low-cost private school, five parents from medium-cost private schools and one mother from a high-cost private school. The parents who participated in this study were not necessarily parents whose children participated in the focus groups. The decision to interview parents was based primarily on their having a child who was studying in the final year of junior secondary school (see Table 4-3).

Individual interviews		
Parents	Gender	Occupation
Ahmad	M	Shoe shop owner
Dara	F	Housewife
Imam	M	School vice principal
Lia	F	Housewife
Nisa	F	Housewife
Rizki	M	School staff member
Siti	F	Housewife
Tari	F	Housewife + Dressmaker
Wati	F	Housewife + Grocery seller
Yani	F	Online seller

Table 4-3_List of parents (pseudonyms) participating in the main study

4.4.2 Data gathering tools

There were three data gathering tools: classroom observations, individual interviews and focus group discussions. The following sections discuss the decisions taken to employ these tools and the research processes that followed.

Classroom observations

Observation is “the process of gathering open-ended, first-hand information by observing people and places at a research site” (Creswell, 2012: 213). Conducting observations is also the most direct way of obtaining data:

“it is not what people have written on the topic (what they intend to do, or should do). It is not what they say they do. It is what they actually do (which may also be reflected to some extent in records)” (Gillham, 2000: 46).

Having access to classroom observations allowed the researcher to gain an awareness of what the teachers actually did in the classroom in preparing the students for the national examination. The data gathered were used to develop questions that would be put to the teachers in the interviews in the main study. Gray (2004: 238) claimed that observations provided “an opportunity to get beyond people’s opinions and self-interpretations of their attitudes and behaviours towards an evaluation of their actions in practice”. The classroom observations in the first pilot study were focussed on teachers’ behaviours and practices and their attitudes towards the national examination.

Wragg (2012) emphasized that there are advantages to video-tape methods when doing classroom observations, including “good visual and sound record which can be replayed several times; no pressure to make instant decisions; focus can be on teacher only or on an individual or group of pupils; lessons can be discussed with participants” (p.16). The classroom observations in the main study used one camera placed at the

back of the classroom that could capture the process of classroom activities. This data gathering tool was used in four junior secondary schools (state, low-cost, medium-cost and high-cost private schools). The observations included four meetings of up to 90 minutes each for each school (See Appendix 10 for the report of the classroom observations).

Individual interviews

Interviewing is one of the most common qualitative methods employed in researching small educational settings. Although it had been suggested that interviewing was a non-naturalistic method to collect data (Greener, 2011), it was nonetheless useful when attempting to understand people's experiences. Punch (1998) argued that interviewing is "a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality" (p. 174-175). In the interviews, an idea or set of main questions was used, whilst allowing for other ideas or questions to develop as the conversation flowed (Drever, 2003). The decision to use interviews was made to gain in-depth insights from participants.

Interviews – which took place in the schools – were conducted with the use of a video recorder to record for research purposes only what was being said and expressed by the participants. They were carried out face-to-face in order to ensure any non-verbal communication was not missed. Having face-to-face interviews had potential to gain detailed qualitative data that would otherwise go uncollected if the interviews were done by telephone. The presence of the interviewer was likely to be more beneficial during the interview process. Interviewees could build natural interaction with an outsider more positively than when interacting on the phone. The individual interviews allowed time for the interviewees to respond and expand upon issues identified. The advantage of this interview format was that the interviewer had "a greater say in focussing the conversation on issues that he or she deems important in relation to the research project" (Brinkmann, 2013: 21). At the beginning of interview, each participant read the Plain Language Statement and signed the consent form.

"Given that teachers play the key role in interpreting, mediating and realizing what goes on in educational institutions, their values, motivations and understandings have considerable influence on professional practices of all kinds" (Goodson and Sikes, 2008: 57). By asking the teachers about their personal and educational background or teaching experience, there was the potential to investigate how their personal

background influenced their professional identity. The interview, which lasted up to 30 minutes, began by asking about demographic information, such as when they started teaching, the reason why they decided to be teachers, how many years they had been teaching in their current school and their impressions about their role in teaching final year students (see Appendix 1 for the interview questions).

Data from parents was also required to gain an understanding of how the national examination may influence their perceptions of practices. Ten parents were invited to reflect on their perceptions of the national examination (see Appendix 2 for the questions). Parents were also asked to discuss how they supported their children's learning activity outside the classroom, in an attempt to gain an insight into parental educational involvement. A parental interview was necessary to explore what influences the decision-making processes of families choosing and applying for junior secondary school, including how they prepared their children to enrol in senior secondary school.

Focus group discussions

The distinction between focus group and individual interviews is “that the group interaction may trigger thoughts and ideas among participants that do not emerge during an individual interview” (Lichtman, 2012: 207). It was thought that students might feel nervous if they were asked to do an individual interview with the researcher. Therefore, focus groups were employed to explore student perceptions of the influence of the national examination on the learning and teaching process. Final year students were purposely selected, as it was assumed that final year students were affected by the national examination more strongly than those who were still in the first and second years of their studies, as the examination was only conducted in the final year.

This process of collecting data was conducted by asking a small number of general questions to elicit responses from the participants in the group. Creswell (2012) emphasized that there are at least two advantages to collect data using focus groups. Firstly, they would “likely yield the best information when interviewees are similar to and cooperative with each other” (Creswell, 2012: 218). Secondly, focus groups are more effective than individual interviews, since people could be hesitant to provide information when one-on-one with the researcher (Creswell, 2012). Bechoffer and Paterson (2000) suggest that focus group discussion “involves bringing a group of people together and conducting a very lightly structured interview with them around some particular focussed topic” (p.67).

As the students would not be familiar with the interviewer, it would be more comfortable for them to be in a group situation rather than in individual interview. In a group discussion, the students would probably interact and engage with each other, which might lead to higher quality data. Focus group discussion was likely to be a good way of breaking up the monotony of an interview and, given the age of the students (14 to 16 years old), this was considered to be a valuable data gathering tool. It was pertinent to video record the discussion to enable different students' voices and expression to be identified accurately during the transcription process, as it would be difficult to identify their voices if the focus group discussion were audio-recorded only.

At the four schools who accepted the request the range of students selected varied between low, medium and high-achieving students. Four focus groups from four junior secondary schools consisting of up to nine students in each group were conducted totalling 29 students. This enabled students to share their understandings and perceptions of the national examination's influence on teaching and learning practices. In an attempt to accurately capture the voices and opinions of individuals in the focus group, discussions were video-recorded. The questions asked explored students' insights into the national examination and the extent to which the examination drives their learning activities and motivations as individuals (see Appendix 3). Focus group discussions were between 13 to 23 minutes in duration. Focus groups contained both male and female students, with the exception of the focus group conducted in Millennium High School, where the participants selected by the teachers were all female.

4.5 Ethical considerations

This research was conducted in accordance with established ethical procedures (BERA, 2011). Complying with the University of Glasgow's mandatory guidance for carrying out any research involving human subjects required submission of an ethics application form to the College of Social Science Ethics Committee. Ethical approval is expected to be received before any study is carried out (Abbot and Sapsford, 2006). The ethics application initially provided: justification for the research; evidence that written permission would be required from school principals to allow access to the teaching participants; information on the criteria for selection of the teachers; description of how the data would be gathered; description of the method of handling the data to ensure confidentiality and of storing and disposing of the data safely. An assurance was also

provided in the application that all participants would be anonymised to ensure no breach of confidentiality in handling the data.

The application also requested consent from the Ethics Committee to hire three research assistants, since travel from Glasgow to Bandung was not feasible. A letter confirming that the application had been approved and the study could be conducted starting from 17 January 2015 was then received (see Appendix 4). A request to amend the data gathering tools was later submitted to the Ethics committee of the University of Glasgow, as the study was also to conduct individual interviews with parents and focus group discussion with students; the necessary amendment was granted by the committee in 12 February 2016 (see Appendix 5).

Appendix 6 shows a letter containing information and permit requests to conduct the study in the chosen research sites which were given to eight school principals. English was used in the letter as well as in the Plain Language Statement (see Appendix 7) and the consent forms (see Appendix 8) were distributed to the participants. Since this study also involved young people below 18 years of age, consent letters were distributed to their parents and in return the parents signed the consent letters confirming that they allowed their child to participate in the study (see Appendix 9). The participants were made aware that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they could refuse to take part in the study. No payments or inducements were offered for participating. To avoid the identity of participants being published, their names and the names of the schools were changed, and pseudonyms are used throughout the thesis. After the data had been collected, a signed letter from each of the eight school principals confirmed that the study had been carried out with his/her agreement (see the example of the letter in Appendix 11).

4.6 Data analysis

Reflection on both pilot studies and the main data collection led to the classroom observation technique being eliminated from the analysis process. Although the technique could offer valuable benefits (Lichman, 2013), the two pilot studies and the main study indicated a common practice of teaching to the test in the classroom practices. Exploring the teachers' views more deeply in the interviews might provide information about why such practice was contextually common. Time limitation was also a factor in deciding to exclude the classroom observations from the analysis.

Analysing data is the “process of resolving data into its constituent components, to reveal its characteristic elements and structure” (Dey, 2005: 31). Silverman (2015) argued that when researchers began qualitative data analysis it could be akin to “exploring a new territory without an easy-to-read map” (p.208). In a qualitative research study, it was important to understand the key approaches to defining the research problem and reviewing the literature. Roulston (2014: 299) indicated that in order to analyse the data, “researchers must align the theoretical assumptions about interviewing with the kind of research design and interview methods used to generate data”. The study presented here used thematic analysis, which Braun and Clarke (2006: 79) defined as “a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data”.

Ary et al. (2010: 481) assert that analysing qualitative data involves “attempts to comprehend the phenomenon under study, synthesize information and explain relationships, theorize about how and why the relationships appear as they do, and reconnect the new knowledge with what is already known.” Data analysis could be then complex and time consuming. However, the task can become manageable when it is broken down into key stages. The data obtained from interviews and focus group discussions was analysed using the three stages proposed by Lichtman (2012). These involved sorting the data into codes, categories and concepts (see Figure 4-1).

Analysing the data systematically is fundamental to the study. The systematic process can facilitate the generation of rich data, as expected in this study. To be able to explore the data gathered thoroughly, analysis relied on careful transcription. Procedures for data analysis in this study consisted of converting video to audio files, transcribing the audio files, translating the transcript into English, coding the translation, and categorizing and interpreting the data. Specialist software packages can be used to assist in organising qualitative data analysis. However, it was decided to examine the empirical data manually to allow for a more personal interpretation of the transcripts, such as nuances of participants’ speech, and to allow for more critical thinking about the phenomenon under investigation. What follows, then, is an outline of the different data analysis procedures employed.

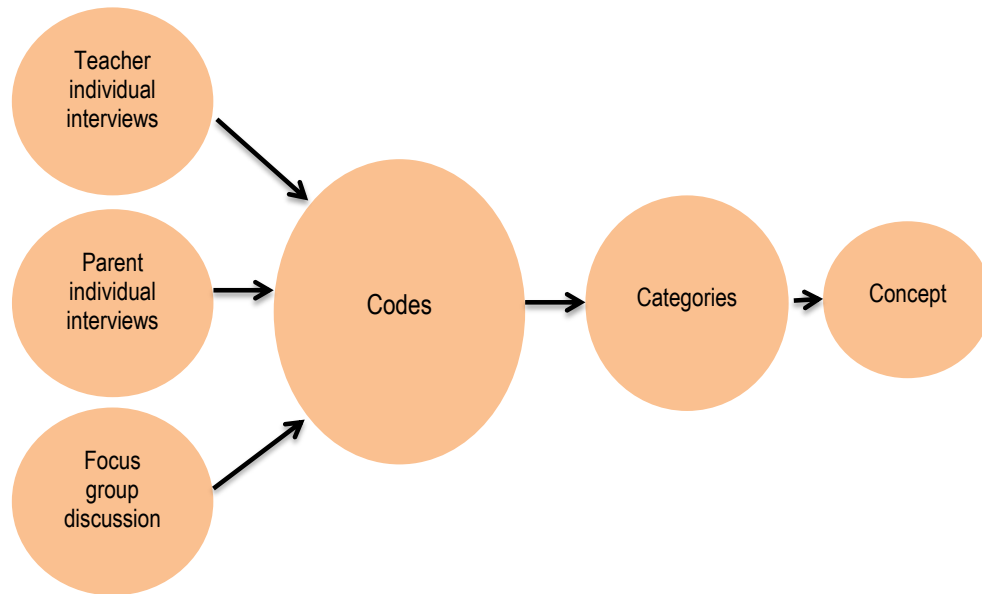


Figure 4-1_Three Cs of Data Analysis, adopted from Lichtman (2012: 252)

4.6.1 Data transcription and translating

The first stage in the analytical process was to transcribe the audio files into text files. Given the time-consuming nature of the transcription process, an acquaintance was hired to transcribe the Indonesian interview text. To ensure the transcriptions were accurate, the transcriptions between the original audio and video files were compared. The Indonesian transcripts (126 pages double spaced) were then translated into English. During the translation, it was necessary to ensure that the language was not ambiguous in either version while maintaining the original meaning. So, in the translation process, the translated transcripts were re-read to record any initial thoughts or valuable information and pay attention to avoid misinterpretation of meaning that could be lost in the translation.

4.6.2 Coding and categorizing

Coding was considered to be at the core of qualitative data analysis, as it included “the identification of categories and themes and their refinement” (Ary et al., 2010: 483). David and Sutton (2011: 339) defined coding as “the process of applying codes to chunks of text so that those chunks can be interlinked to highlight similarities and differences within and between texts”. As coding was about developing concepts from data (Ary et al., 2010), the words, phrases and sentences in the transcripts to define concepts were considered carefully. Once the transcripts were translated into English, the English transcripts were then coded using brief phrases. The coding process was directed by all three research questions and related themes. The codes were constructed

simply and precisely to keep the nuance and meaning of any concepts (see example in Appendix 12).

Reducing the number of codes involved grouping similar topics into one category. Certain codes were found to be major categories on their own, while others were grouped together under a connecting major category. Once categories had been established, some categories were linked further to create themes. The boundaries of categories involved interpretive judgement that was influenced by experience. Main categories in this study included: perception of the washback effect, school choices, teaching practices and parental support. The process of coding and categorizing was repeated for each transcript to focus on the research questions (see a sample of categorising of the transcript in Appendix 13).

4.6.3 Conceptualizing and interpreting

The final step in the analysis process was to identify the concepts that emerged from the data. Establishing concepts from codes was influenced by the existing literature and the data itself. Conceptualizing involved reflecting on the manufactured codes and developing significant understandings based on the connections among the categories. Conceptualizing and interpreting in this way was about producing meaning from the data and providing explanation. As there are no definitive rules to follow in interpreting qualitative data (Ary et al., 2010), the process depended on the researcher's personal perspective, knowledge and theoretical orientation. Direct quotations from interview and focus group transcripts supported any interpretation made, reflecting "narratives that represent participants; experiences and perspectives" (Roulston, 2014: 305).

Summary of Chapter 4

This chapter outlined the research methodology incorporated with the literature review discussed in Chapter 3. The qualitative and interpretive approach was chosen to investigate the perceptions of three groups: teachers, students and parents. In attempting to answer the research questions, choosing an interpretivism stance was considered to be appropriate in seeking why the phenomenon of washback occurred. The case study approach was deemed most suitable for exploring the perceptions of participants regarding any washback effect of the national examination on their practices. Two pilot studies conducted to develop appropriate data gathering tools and interview questions were described. The following section of this chapter discussed the impact of the

piloting. As the result, classroom observations and individual interviews with school principals were then withdrawn from the main study. All three groups of participants in the main study were then introduced. Individual interview and focus group discussion were chosen to carry out the study in exploring the perceptions of three participating groups: teachers, students and parents. A section highlighting the ethical considerations was included. After explaining the process of gathering data from the participants, the final section identified the procedure for analysing the data.

The findings and discussion of the main study will be discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 5 : Results and discussion of teachers' interviews in response to the national examination

Overview

The previous chapter described the methodology adopted for this research. Two instruments; individual interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect data from teachers, students and parents. The goal of this study was to explore feelings, perceptions and practices of teachers, students and parents related to the national examination.

This chapter presents the analysis of findings from the interviews with eight English teachers (see table 5-1) who taught final year students at eight junior secondary schools in Bandung, Indonesia. The table identifies each teacher participating in the individual interview by pseudonym and provides information on their school, gender and teaching experience. The participants were from various schools (state school, low-, medium- and high-cost private schools) and had varied teaching experiences ranging from four to 22 years. The type of private school (low-, medium-, and high-cost) was categorised by myself, based on the teachers' responses during the interview regarding the tuition fee and also the condition and the facilities of the building of each participating school.

Name	School	Gender	Teaching experience
Putri	State	Female	22 years
Fera	High-cost private	Female	4 years
Nopi	Medium-cost private	Female	10 years
Endang	Medium-cost private	Male	8 years
Indri	Medium-cost private	Female	10 years
Husna	Low-cost private	Female	9 years
Susan	Low-cost private	Female	5 years
Mahmud	Low-cost private	Male	14 years

Table 5-1_Profiles of participating teachers

The analysis of the English transcripts from eight teachers participating in the semi-structured interviews was based on the three research questions applied in this study: (1) How do teachers, students and parents in Indonesia perceive the impact of the national examination? (2) How does the national examination affect teaching and learning practices in final year classrooms dominated by the national examination cycle? (3) How might students' experiences in the national examination year be

improved? To categorize the teachers' transcripts, I used three overarching themes: teachers' feelings, teachers' views of the national examination and teaching final year students. Throughout the process of analysis, the themes remained the same but the sub-themes developed and modified. The analysis involved reading and rereading the teachers' interview transcripts (91 pages in total) seeking to identify themes that emerged from the interviews that would offer insights into what mattered to them in response to the national examination. Teachers' responses were coded and comments labelled for example, high level of anxiety, teaching methods, challenges (see Appendix 12 for an example of coding). The labels identified represented the sub-themes of my analysis and shaped the presentation of findings.

The structure of this chapter follows the presentation of findings categorised in the three overarching themes: (5.1) Teachers' feelings about the examination, (5.2) Teachers' views of the examination and (5.3) Teaching final year students. Each theme interprets the analysis of the teachers' interviews and develops a number of sub-themes emerging from the transcripts. A number of direct quotations from teachers are used to illustrate their responses under each sub-theme. Teachers' feelings in this chapter refer to the teachers' response on how they relate their feelings towards the national examination. Meanwhile, the transcripts of the teachers' semi-structured interviews that showed how the participating teachers considered the national examination as a test were included in the theme: Teachers' views of the examination. The third theme: Teaching final year students dealt with the teachers' responses on their experiences in teaching the students who would sit in the national examination. The list of themes, sub-themes and sub-subthemes that emerged in the analysis of the teachers' interviews is outlined in Table 5-2.

The interviews with the teachers were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the real life experiences of teachers in order to clarify a particular phenomenon (Kvale, 1996), in this case their experiences of the examination. This instrument was also applied to explore the teachers' perspective in "interpreting, mediating and realizing" what was happening in the educational institutions, especially in the classroom (Goodson and Sikes, 2008: 57) in regards to the examination.

Themes	Sub-themes	Sub-subthemes
5.1 Teachers' feelings about the national examination	5.1.1 Neutral feelings	No pressure
	5.1.2 High levels of anxiety	Fear of students failing
	5.1.3 Mixed feelings	Partly positive and partly negative response to the examination
5.2 Teachers' views of the national examination	5.2.1 It is fit for purpose	It measures the students' competence
		It motivates the students to learn
		It evaluates the teachers
	5.2.2 The impacts of the examination on the number of students enrolled in a school	It has impacts
		It has no impacts
	5.2.3 It is not fair	Three years of learning is determined by four day examination
		Every school has different learning resources, financial and human capitals
		It fails to assess different potentials that the students had
		Low achievers can gain higher scores in the examination
		Students' well-being during the examination can influence their performance
		It is not transparent
	5.2.4 It needs improvement	'Treat us differently'
		The urge to implement Assessment of Learning
5.3 Teaching final year students	5.3.1 Classroom management	More challenging
		Less challenging
	5.3.2 Teaching goals	To prepare for the graduation
		To prepare for the examination
	5.3.3 Teaching guidelines	Based on the syllabus
		Mixed between syllabus and guidelines of the examination
		Based on guidelines of the examination
	5.3.4 Exam-preparation activities	Enhancement class
		Teaching 'how to beat the test'
		Grouping the students
		Vocabulary memorization

Table 5-2_Themes, sub-themes and sub-subthemes emerged in the analysis of teachers' interviews

The following sections present the main themes, sub-themes and sub-subthemes consecutively. Key findings are discussed at the end of each section, and the chapter ends with a summary.

5.1 Teachers' feelings about the examination

All eight teachers in this study were asked about their feelings related to their knowing that their students would soon sit in this high-stakes test. This section is organised in terms of the types of feeling identified in the analysis of the interview transcripts. These encompass three types of feelings categorised under three sub-themes: (5.1.1) Neutral feelings, (5.1.2) High levels of anxiety and (5.1.3) Mixed feelings.

5.1.1 *Neutral feelings*

This sub-theme referred to a teacher's belief that the examination had little impact on his feelings. Endang who worked in a medium cost private school indicated neutral feelings. He said, "There is no such difference" when he was asked whether his feelings changed due to the implementation of a new policy that made the results of the examination not as a sole indicator for student's graduation. He was optimistic that his students could do well in the standardized test as his school principal praised him as more qualified than other English teachers.

"From my experience, the school principal trusts me more to teach the ninth graders. Slowly but sure my teaching quality and character are getting better. So until now I still teach in the ninth grade, though there are a lot of senior teachers above me. But maybe because of my experience and my wisdom in teaching, I am suited to teach the ninth graders" (Endang, individual interview, p.3).

He felt that the school principal was pleased with his teaching performance due to the fact he was more experienced in managing the final year classrooms. When the interview was conducted, Endang had taught for eight years. He suggested that his ability to control the classroom compared to other English teachers led him to be assigned to teaching the final year in consecutive years. He later stated that the results of the English and Indonesian in try-out tests² were "above the average" compared with two other subjects tested in the examination. His experience and the good scores his students achieved in the tests suggested that he had greater confidence in facing the examination. As his students seemed not to have problems in doing the English test, Endang had neutral feelings about the examination.

² Try out tests are practice tests designed by the school and the local government. The students usually have at least two try-out tests before the national examination. The try-out test is intended to evaluate how ready the students to sit in the national examination (Saukah and Cahyono, 2015).

5.1.2 High level of anxiety

This sub-theme recognised teachers' responses that showed their negative feelings towards the examination. Fear of students failing was among the perceptions that emerged in the analysis.

Fear of students failing

Fear of students failing referred to the fear two teachers showed considering the examination. Indri who taught in a private school said, "I'm afraid having a student who didn't graduate since it will affect the quantity of the students". The graduation that Indri referred was to succeed in the examination. She associated the results of the examination with the parents' decision to enrol their child in the school where she worked. She seemed to fear that the parents would not let their children study in her school after they graduated from primary school if there was a student who had failed in this examination.

Nopi also shared a similar feeling. She stated, "All of us are terrified. We are afraid they would not graduate". Her statement indicated that she was not the only one who feared of failing students. When she said the words 'us' and 'we', she excluded the students. It indicated that she act as a representative of the school society or group teachers. She later said, "I'm afraid the [students'] score will be low". In the interview, she also stated a greater pressure she experienced in teaching the final year students. She said, "The burden is heavier because they would face the examination". Nopi's statement indicated that she felt responsible for ensuring the students gain high scores in the examination.

"If later there is even one single student that doesn't graduate, I would be ashamed so as a teacher I failed... the school title will be at stake too"
(Nopi, individual interview, p.3 and 10).

Nopi's statement was a sign of a belief that the relation between the results of the examination and successful or failed teaching was relatively strong. She perceived that she was entitled to be considered as a good teacher if her students could gain high scores in the examination. Conversely, she believed her teaching was a failure when she had a student who did not graduate. Embarrassment and guilt dominated her feelings towards the examination.

Nopi, who had dreamt of becoming a teacher since she was a child, had been teaching at Pleasant Hill junior high school since 2009. Her parents, family members

and relatives who mostly worked in schools inspired her to follow a similar profession. She started teaching at the school as her cousin who used to be the English teacher there had become an English teacher at a state school. She was soon recruited as the school principal was also her cousin. Pleasant Hill was a medium-cost school located in a suburban area. People living in the area near to the school preferred enrolling their children in this school as there was no state school near their houses. So the school was popular among the people in the area. Having family members and relatives working at the same place as her, Nopi believed that she represented a group of family and society around her. She confirmed the issue, “my sense of belonging to this school is high”. Her statement clearly showed that she took a collectivist³ stance since she indicated that she set her school as a priority above herself. Her feeling of shame could possibly represent her feelings as a member of family and school rather than as an individual.

5.1.3 Mixed feelings

This sub-theme identified the teachers’ responses that indicated partly positive and partly negative reaction to the national examination. The analysis identified four teachers had mixed feelings of the examination.

Susan, who taught in a low-cost private school clearly said, “No” when I asked if she was afraid of students gaining low scores. Susan’s confidence in facing this external summative assessment appeared to come from the fact that she had not been teaching the final year students for a long time so she did not have much experience in preparing for the examination. She said, “No. It’s only been the second year for me to teach the ninth graders. Last year, I didn’t get any impact [from the national examination result]”. It was interesting to notice how Susan correlated her lack of teaching experience with the low level of anxiety she felt. She indicated a greater confidence was the result of her relatively short experience in teaching the final year students.

Besides showing neutral feeling in the interview, Susan also indicated fear of failing as she said,

“What I’m afraid of is regarding to how they answer the questions [of the national examination]...The English test in the national examination has different texts. Though the questions are similar, but the texts are different. They [The students] usually get confused...Surely the students who will face

³ Matsumoto (2009: 118) describes collectivists to “define themselves as members of groups, give priority to group goals, behave mostly according to group norms, and do not leave their groups even when they are dissatisfied with them”.

the national examination, but I also feel terrified” (Susan, individual interview, p.10).

She believed that the English test was more difficult than the other three subjects tested in the examination. The lack of ability that the students had in understanding the texts in the English test appeared to make Susan fear that the students could not do well in doing the English test. The analysis of Susan’s interview suggested that Susan provided inconsistent statements in response to the examination. Her transcripts indicated that her two years of teaching final year students led her to believe that the examination did not influence her feelings. However, she also suggested that the difficulty that her students could face in sitting the examination created a greater anxiety on her.

Meanwhile, Mahmud, a private school teacher suggested that the examination had no impact on his feeling. He said,

“I think there is no negative impact of the national examination at the moment...We should not consider it as a fear factor. Just consider it as a usual thing; it’s not significantly different with the regular test” (Mahmud, individual interview, p.15).

The statement above suggested that the examination was not to be used as the sole indicator for students’ success in schooling and thus the examination was a low-stakes test. As the current policy gave similar weight to the scores gained in the examination as to the scores gained in another test such as the school examination⁴, Mahmud felt that the pressure was similar to that he experienced in facing the school examination.

He later indicated that the decision coming from the Indonesian Ministry of Education to let the school certify the grades of final year students was the cause of his low level of anxiety. He said, “I feel indeed there is influence...the teachers’ concern lessened...Because at the moment the one who decided whether the students can graduate or not is the school”.

However, Mahmud also indicated that he had feelings of pressure arising from the examination as he said, “There is like a burden on the teachers when we face the national examination”. He believed that all of the teachers experienced what he experienced as he seemed to represent the teachers in his statement. He later stated a reason for having such pressure, “The problem lies on the teachers when the students’

⁴ School test is a test administered before the national examination. Different with the national examination which only covers four subjects, school test covers all subjects learned at school (Indonesian Ministry of Education, 2015).

pass in the national examination is a must". He suggested that the teachers were responsible in helping the students to pass the examination.

Assessing school quality and teacher performance based on the scores achieved in the examination led Mahmud to have a highly negative feeling about the examination -- shame. He said:

"A teacher would definitely feel ashamed or would feel bad when there were students who failed in the national examination....If the average score of this school is low, then automatically we would be ashamed" (Mahmud, individual interview, p.5 and 16).

When Mahmud used the word 'we' instead of 'I' as in the above statement, it indicated that he perceived that he was a representative of a group of teachers in answering my questions in the interviews. The use of 'we' could possibly be an indicator that Mahmud was a collectivist. He suggested that there was a great pressure among the teachers at his school regarding the examination. He believed that society linked the results of the examination to the teacher's and school's reputation. Failure to meet the expectations of society would lead to feelings of embarrassment. Within this society, low scores in the examination appeared to represent failure on the part of the teachers in teaching the students. Thus such failure was something to be avoided.

Mahmud's parents who were also teachers motivated him to have a similar occupation. Unlike Nopi who worked in a medium-cost private school, the school where Mahmud worked was a low-cost school. Its building was far from people's residences which made it difficult to compete with a state school that was more easily accessed. Those who studied at the school were the students who failed to gain admission to the state school. However, Mahmud believed that having a vocation as a teacher gave him a high level social status. He said, "Though the salary is very low compared to those who work in a factory but people still give more respect to the teachers". This belief possibly led Mahmud to have feeling of shame if his students failed the examination.

Six teachers including Nopi and Mahmud who participated in this study had family members who were teachers as well. However, the feeling of shame was not found in the other four participants whose families or relatives were teachers too. Endang, for example who said that his mother was a teacher stated that the examination had not led to this feeling. Susan whose father was a vice principal where she worked

also did not mention that failure of students in the examination would lead her to be ashamed. Husna, whose brother was also the school principal of the school where she worked, did not say she would feel ashamed if her students gained low scores in the examination. Nor was a feeling of shame over student failure expressed by Putri whose family members and relatives had similar occupations.

In 2015, the government decided to modify the policy so the student's qualification was not only determined by the scores gained in the examination (Ministry of Education, 2015). The decision was viewed positively by Husna, an English teacher in a medium-cost private school. She said,

“It's been two years [since the policy changed, so] I don't feel quite stressed...Then from the school environment and the colleagues look like they were relaxed. So we feel more relaxed” (Husna, individual interview, p.10).

She indicated that the examination did not influence her feeling. The positive feeling that Husna stated could be an indicator that the pressure was not as high as when the examination was used as a students' completion test. Husna's statement, “It's been two years I don't feel quite stressed” suggested that she used to feel higher pressure before the Indonesian Ministry of Education decided to modify the regulation of the students' completion. However, the fact that the final year students would soon sit in the examination made Husna to experience more pressure in teaching the students in the second semester. She stated,

“Teaching in the first semester, automatically I was more relaxed, there was no such heavy burden to achieve in the national examination. In the second semester, I myself feel a little burden because all of them have to be graduated” (Husna, individual interview, p.6).

Her statement indicated that the national examination was still perceived as a high-stakes test as she felt that teaching the students in the second semester was more challenging since she was responsible in students' graduation.

As the results of the implementation of the new policy, Fera who taught in a high-cost private school also expressed positive feelings. She said, “I feel more relieved since it's not only the government who determines the students' graduation”. Her positive feeling arose as the examination was not a high-stakes test as it used to be. However, she later indicated that the reputation to have her students gaining the highest scores in the examination led her to have worry about the scores. She said,

“Last year, the score for the English national examination was 96; it means that there were only two incorrect answers. I was proud having such children since they didn’t go to the cramming school but could get such high score. I’m worried whether this year the students can get higher score or not” (Fera, individual interview, p.7).

Fera’s statement indicated that gaining high scores was her concern. She then said, “If I see there’s a student who is still below the average, I feel that I haven’t done my best”. There was a possibility that a high-cost school like Fera’s workplace was competitive and wished to be excellence in regards to the examination. The school where Fera worked was rewarded by the local government for gaining the highest scores in the 2015 examination. Fera, along with the school staff expected that in the following examination the students could maintain the school achievement:

“They passed the try-out test and the children were included who got the three highest score in this area. Last year we also got the highest average score in this area...we got an award” (Fera, individual interview, p.5).

Putri; a state school teacher also responded positively to the improved policy. She said, “The national examination is no longer the graduation determination. So the burden for the teacher is much lighter.” However, during the interview she also said, “The national examination is still something frightening. I don’t know”. When the interview was conducted in 2016, Putri had been teaching in a state junior secondary school for 18 years. Despite the fact she had relatively long period of teaching experience, she still felt anxious about the examination. Putri also expressed worry about the scores. She said: “I really worry...What makes me worry is indeed the score”. Despite the fact she noticed that the new policy had removed one source of anxiety, however she also indicated that the policy failed to make the examination as a low-stakes test.

Discussion of (5.1) Teachers’ feelings about the examination

Participating teachers had various responses in indicating their feelings about the examination. There was only one teacher who appeared to have neutral feelings without having concerned about the national examination. Seven other teachers showed divergent levels of anxiety.

While, Putri and Fera showed their low levels of anxiety as the results of the implementation of the policy to make the results of the examination no longer the sole determinant of student graduation, Putri and Fera also shared their worry about the

possibility that the scores their students gained in the examination could be lower than they expected. The analysis of Putri's data, however, failed to explore her reasons for having such a worry. Meanwhile, Fera clearly indicated that her school's reputation was at stake. Her position as a member of the teaching staff at a prestigious private school appeared to create her worry. As her previous year students were among those who gained the highest scores in the examination, she perceived that she was responsible for maintaining the school's reputation. There was a possibility that the pressure in the high-cost private schools was higher in trying to maintain excellence in the examination results.

The changed policy that ended the use of the national examination as the sole graduation factor did not seem to influence the teachers' perspective of the national examination as a high-stakes test. This finding was somehow contrary with a private school teacher interviewed by Sutari (2017). The teacher in her study said that the national examination was no longer a high-stakes testing. However, her finding failed to explore the teacher's perspective more deeply where we could find the reason why the teacher believed that the national examination in Indonesia as a low-stakes test. Sutari (2017) also did not mention clearly the location where her study took place and the type of private school in which the teacher in her study worked.

Washback on teachers' feelings was one of the themes discussed by Friska (2015: 56) in the results of her study. Her research in three junior secondary schools in Tangerang, Indonesia identified that one teacher felt nervous and stressful "to score 9 for English"; the other teacher felt "pressure from the students". Friska showed that one English teacher was not pressurized by the national examination. However, her findings from classroom observations, interviews and questionnaires were not explored thoroughly. The interviews with teachers in this study also did not find that the pressure that the teachers felt came from the students, as experienced by the teachers in Friska's (2015) study. This present study however, raised further explanations of the factors that led to the national examination influencing teachers' feelings. The negative feelings that three teachers (Nopi, Mahmud, and Fera) in this study showed were likely to be associated with a perspective that low achievement by the students showed their inadequate effort.

Collectivism emerged from the analysis of the teachers' data. Instead of feeling pressurized by the students as identified by Friska's (2015) inquiry, two private school

teachers suggested that their anxiety was caused by their belief in collective responsibility. VandenBos (2015:211) defined collectivism as “a social or cultural tradition, ideology, or personal outlook that emphasizes the unity of the group or community rather than each person’s individuality”. Representing a group of teachers as expressed by Nopi and Mahmud indicated that they belonged to a teaching group and their statement represented the group as a whole. There was a tendency that one the part of Mahmud and Nopi to believe in a collectivist society in Indonesia which made them put the goal of the group as their priority. The findings suggested that both of them felt shame about failing students. The scores in the national examination that was associated with a high level of collectivism produced feelings of shame and guilt in two teachers if the results were lower than the school expected. The findings from the interviews with Nopi and Mahmud showed that their understanding of what successful teaching meant could be interpreted in this study as the behaviours of the teachers to put great effort into teaching the students for the national examination. Knowing that the students gained good scores in the national examination as the teachers expected could correlate with their success as members of a family and society.

5.2 Teachers’ views of the national examination

The previous theme explored the way in which the examination influenced the teachers’ feelings. The washback of the examination on teachers’ perspectives is presented in this section. During the interviews, the teachers were asked “What do you think about the national examination?” as an open question to explore their perspective towards the examination. Four sub-themes emerged in the analysis: (5.2.1) It is fit for purpose, (5.2.2) The impact of the examination on the quantity of the students, (5.2.3) It is not fair and (5.2.4) It needs improvement.

The following four sections present the four sub-themes consecutively, and a discussion is included at the end to outline the main ideas emerging from this theme.

5.2.1 It is fit for purpose

This sub-theme referred to the teachers’ perspective of the benefits the examination offered, outlined by seven of the participating teachers. The teachers’ positive perspectives included their opinion that the examination was fit for the purposes of measuring the students’ competence, motivating the students to learn and evaluating the teachers.

It measures the students' competence

One teacher (Mahmud) who was interviewed in this study clearly described his positive perspective of the examination. He positively believed that the purpose of the examination was “to measure the students’ competence”. Mahmud clearly stated that the examination was fit for the purpose of measuring the students’ competence. He later suggested that he would find it hard to assess the students’ learning if there was no examination. He said,

“It is probably because in the regular (classroom and school) tests, they were supervised by their own teachers, while in the national examination, they were supervised by the teachers from the other schools, marked by someone else” (Mahmud, individual interview, p.10).

Mahmud’s statement above provided an insight into the need to assess the students through the examination. The results of the examination could then be used to evaluate the students’ competence. The examination was purportedly reliable in measuring what the students had learned in the classroom.

It motivates the students to learn

This perception covered the purpose of the examination in motivating the students, based on the teachers’ perspective. Four teachers in this study perceived that the examination could motivate the students to work harder.

When Endang was asked about the positive impact that the examination could have, he answered, “It can have a big impact for the children, to motivate them to study harder”. His statement indicated that the students would have no reason to study if they did not sit the examination. He found it beneficial that the final year students had the examination as they would externally be encouraged to study the subjects due to the fact the students’ academic and career future was at stake. Nopi echoed Endang’s perception. She said, the examination could “make them [the students] study harder”. The findings then indicated that the motivation of the students to learn was extrinsically triggered. In other words, they had a tendency to believe that they had to learn instead of wanting to learn. The examination was then the teachers’ prime means of motivating students to study. This situation indicated that there was an additional purpose of the examination that the teachers perceived besides selecting the students for the next schooling level.

The analysis of the data showed that four teachers including Endang considered the examination as the key factor in motivating students to learn. As a result of the students' negligence (described further in 5.3.1), the four teachers tried to motivate them to think how important the examination was for their future. They believed that the students' perceptions of the importance of the examination could affect the students' learning. Indri regarded that "one to thing to push the children [to learn] is to have them do the national examination". Indri's statement showed that the examination was perceived as helping the students to be more motivated to learn.

Furthermore, Nopi indicated that if she told her students about the new policy – in which the results of the examination had less influence on the students' graduation – the students would have no motivation to learn. Nopi and all the teaching staff at the school decided not to "share with them [students] that graduation is now determined by the school [not the national examination]". Nopi's statement could be interpreted as placing a considerable emphasis on the goal orientation of students. The students were more likely to be motivated to be goal-oriented than learning-oriented. The goal-orientation was also clearly described by Endang who provided a stimulus for his students to gain higher scores in the examination, so the students could enrol in a state school. He said, "I motivate the children to enrol in a state senior secondary school, rather than the private school again". He wanted to show to the rest of society that those who studied in private schools could achieve an academic performance as high as that of students from state schools. It is suggested that Endang and Nopi targeted performance goals rather than learning goals to motivate the students. The purpose of the motivation was not merely to learn the subject but to learn for the examination and gain access to the next schooling level.

Putri, who was working in a state school, also shared a similar opinion:

"They [the students] need to sit the national examination that will make them graduate from the junior secondary school, then continue their studies at the senior secondary school; it will decide their enrolment, they deserve to study in which school [as they studied at a school with better facilities]" (Putri, individual interview, p.5).

Putri's statement above along with statements from Nopi and Endang clearly showed the shift of motivating students from learning the subjects to learning for the examination and to gain access to the next school. The examination was perceived by most teachers in this study to have positive washback on students' motivation but could

then lead to a negative washback as the examination discouraged the students from focussing on the essence of learning (further discussed in 7.2.3). It was evident that the examination was perceived as high-stakes as its results led to serious consequences for the students.

Besides showing her anxiety about the examination, Putri later provided an interesting point regarding her decision:

“I told them if they get 10 (a perfect score in the national examination), I will give them a reward, similarly to last year when there were two students who got a perfect score in the English test...I told them, if there are 10 (students) who achieve a perfect score, I will reward those 10 people as promised” (Putri, individual interview, p.6).

Her willingness to spend her own money to reward the students who gained a perfect score in the English test of the examination was interesting to analyse. It led to at least two possibilities. First, there could be a competition among teachers and schools within the area where this study was conducted. It showed in Fera’s description that “Last year we also got the highest average score in this district... we got an award”. Putri who taught in a state school indicated that students coming from a state school were supposed to gain higher scores in the examination than the private school students. To motivate the students to gain higher scores, Putri would voluntarily promise them a reward. This finding indicated that the competition between the state school and the high-cost private schools was relatively high within the area where this study took place. Second, there was also an evidence of collectivism believed by Putri. She said,

“My great-grandfather was a school principal which used to be a teacher, then my grandfather was also a school principal and definitely he was a teacher. Then my uncle was also a teacher. They are from my father side. From my mother, there were some relatives who became teachers and school principals as well” (Putri, individual interview, p.1).

Having family members and relatives who had a similar profession could possibly lead Putri to be a collectivist who believed that she belonged to a family and she needed to make sure that her family’s pride would not be ruined by her. Although she had no feelings of shame such as those displayed by Nopi and Mahmud (described in 5.1.2 and 5.1.3), she indicated that her success as a family and society member was determined by the scores gained in the examination. In the beginning phase of the interview, she was asked if she had any intention of teaching in another school. She said, “I want to stay

here because my soul probably has been here for 18 years”. Her statement suggested her belief in the value of being a member of the school and that she was responsible for making the school remain respected in the society.

It evaluates the teachers

This purpose attributed to the examination covered teachers’ perceptions that associated the results of the examination with their teaching performance. Six out of eight teaching participants in this study believed that the result of the examination became the keystone in determining the effectiveness or quality of their teaching.

“First, we might get feedback how we teach so far. We improve the lack. Probably so far when we deliver the material, the students didn’t understand it” (Husna, individual interview, p.7).

Husna’s statement above indicated that she used the results of the examination as a reflection to improve her teaching practices. She believed that low scores gained by the students could be attributed to weaknesses in her teaching. She considered the cause of the students gaining low scores in the examination possibly came from her delivering the materials in ways that could not be followed by the students.

“When I looked at the result of the last year national examination, I felt like to recall the memory. I think the way I teach is required to be reformed. In the students’ aspect for example, which method of studying that is supposed to be altered” (Susan, individual interview, p.7)

A statement from Susan above also indicated that Susan thought the success of her teaching was reflected in the results of the examination. Susan also believed she required to improve her teaching method to help the students gain high scores in the examination. Her statement showed that Susan associated her intention to improve her teaching method could contribute to the students’ success in the examination. Teaching method was also perceived by Indri to have an influence on the students’ performance in the examination. She said, “I review the way to have more students graduated. I mean last year, we have 100% graduates, but probably the score was low”. She was relieved that there was no student who failed in the examination. However, she found it necessary to improve her teaching method as there were a number of students who gained low scores in the examination.

The positive perspective that the examination was fit for purpose in evaluating the teachers was also identified by Mahmud. He said,

“It can be a motivation for the teachers to keep improving their ability in teaching whether it’s related to the teaching strategies, approaches and so on to accomplish a much higher achievement” (Mahmud, individual interview, p.15).

It was evident that Mahmud had positive perceptions of the examination. He showed that he used the examination as a reflection to evaluate his teaching practices. He also indicated that the success of teaching was reflected on higher scores in the examination.

Meanwhile, two other teachers (Endang and Nopi) indicated that there was a perception among school principals of a strong link between the examination and the effectiveness and quality of teaching. This was demonstrated in Endang’s description.

“He (the school principal) is planning to recruit new teachers for the natural science and the math subjects, or he might replace the ninth grade teachers to teach the seventh or the eighth graders...It’s being evaluated at the moment; whether the error lies on the children since the natural science and the math subject have a lot of calculation lessons or whether it is the teachers who delivered the material improperly (Endang, individual interview, p.6).

The results of the examination for mathematics and natural sciences in Endang’s school were relatively low when compared to the results of the subjects for English and Indonesian in the examinations. The low results were presumed to be caused by two factors: the students’ failure in understanding the subjects or the low teaching performance of natural science and mathematics teachers. Improved teaching was then believed to lead at some point to improved results in the examination.

Nopi also noted that her school principal took a similar approach. She recounted her school principal’s concerns:

“[The principal said] ‘maybe all this time, it’s not the students who failed in the national examination with a low score, but it’s the teachers who can’t [teach]’...[The teachers] are the ones who are supposed to be tested” (Nopi, individual interview, p.10).

The teachers’ perceptions about the assessment system seemed to influence the scope of the washback effect on the classroom practices. As they also believed that the scores gained in the examination had a significant effect on the teaching quality, the teachers saw it as a part of their responsibility to make sure that their students had the best chance of gaining high scores in the examination. The teachers assumed that the scores

in the examination played an important role in evaluating their teaching performance. The results of the findings suggested that successful teaching was shown by high scores gained by the students in the examination. The examination was not only important for the students' futures but also to the teachers as one of the groups who helped the students to perform well in the examination.

5.2.2 The impacts of the examination on the number of students enrolled in a school

This sub-theme referred to the analysis of the findings that showed the teachers' responses associating the results of the examination with the numbers of the students enrolled in the following year in the schools where they worked. Three teachers said the examination indeed influenced the student numbers while four other teachers in this study said the results of the examination had no impact on the student numbers.

It has impacts

Three teachers who taught in private schools believed that the decision by parents to register their children at a certain school was based on the results of the examination. Susan for example stated, "Having 100% graduates can be our instrument to promote". Though she said she was not afraid of having students gain low scores in the examination (as described in 5.1.1), she still believed that reaching the average scores in the examination was important in ensuring that the parents still considered her school to be a good choice for their child's junior secondary school. Nopi also shared a similar concern,

"This school is in the suburb so everything happened in this school the society would definitely know, for example if we have a hundred per cent graduates automatically the society ((would say)) oh from this school the whole students graduate so to attract the new students" (Nopi, individual interview, page 5-6).

Nopi's statement above suggested that the community surrounding the school where she worked correlated the results of the examination with the school's reputation. Failure to help a student do well in the examination contributed to decreasing numbers of students enrolled in the following year. This view was supported by Indri, who also considered the purpose of the examination to be school enrolment:

"In this private school, it really depends on the quantity of the students. If there are one or two students who didn't graduate, in the following year,

parents might re-consider enrolling their children at this school” (Indri, individual interview, p.7-8).

Indri presumed that the results of the examination had an impact on the school’s future. She believed that parents would not enrol their children in the school where she worked if they found out there was a student who did not graduate. The results of the examination were assumed to have a major role for society especially parents in evaluating her school performance; thus she believed that her school’s future was at stake. Teaching in a private school appeared to lead Indri to believe that the more students enrolled in the school, the better future the school would have and vice versa. When she said, “In this private school, it really depends on the quantity of the students”, it indicated that Indri expected to have more students enrolled in the following year as the management of the school depended on the student numbers. Indri who taught in a medium-cost private school had the pressure of having the students sitting the examination as the results were likely not only related to the students’ future but also to hers and that of the school.

The relationship between the examination and the school’s enrolment was the cause of Indri having this perception. She confirmed that she could possibly have positive feelings if the parents would choose her school without considering the results of the examination as an important element. She said, “If the national examination doesn’t impact on the student enrolment, I will be more relaxed”. For Susan, Nopi and Indri, having every single student succeed in the examination could promote their school to society, thus attracting more parents to enrol their children there. They believed that the results of the examination could determine parental decisions regarding enrolment at her school. Having a student who received a low score in the examination was then a terrifying prospect which they wished to be avoided.

It has no impact

Meanwhile, four other teachers believed that the parents’ decision to gain admission for their child to a school was not based on the results of the examination. Husna verified that the students’ enrolment was not mainly based on the results of the examination. She stated,

“The children enrol in this school because they followed their brothers or sisters who studied at this school as well. Then we promoted that the tuition fee is free or they would get discount. The other reason is probably

because those who were not accepted to the public schools, and then they made this school as their second choice... Regarding to the tuition and book fees, this school is the cheapest. That's what the public considered" (Husna, individual interview, p.8).

Even though she was anxious that her students could gain low scores in the examination, Husna was sure that the society did not consider it as a main factor in deciding about enrolling their child in her school. She believed that the low-cost of tuition fees that the school offered was a sufficient reason to attract parents to enrol their children in her school if they failed to gain access to a state school.

Mahmud echoed this in a similar response that the parents did not decide to send their child to his school based on the results of the examination. He said, "So basically they [the parents] were not bothered by the result of the examination". His position as a teacher in a low-cost private school led him to believe that the parents did not consider the results of the examination as the key factor in registering their child in the school.

Endang also reported that the scores did not correlate directly with the number of students enrolled in his school. He said,

"Indeed almost our students passed the national examination but we don't make it as a main element to promote this school. In fact, we take the extracurricular activities had by this school and the quality of the teachers as the promotion. Because the parents considered this school to have good qualified teachers" (Endang, individual interview, p.8).

Endang stated that the factor which contributed to the number was the after-school activities that his school had. He later suggested that the parents did not relate the quality of the teachers to the results of the examination.

The interview with Putri, the only participant who taught in a state school in this study, suggested that the pressure on her was not as high as that experienced by teachers at private schools, because the scores did not relate to the school's status. She said,

"I think it doesn't affect for the state school like this school since the people look for the state school, so we don't need a direct promotion. But truthfully, there are graduates who can pass the public university entrance examination in a prestigious university in Bandung, or some of our graduates enrolled in a high-ranked upper secondary school in this area...The parents tend to enrol their children to the state school first. So for having 100% graduates or not, it has less influence" (Putri, individual interview, p.10).

Her statement showed that the examination could possibly have no effect on enrolment at a state school. Its reputation of having more learning resources than a private school could cause the parents to prefer the state school over the private school. She suggested that it was thus a challenge that had to be faced by private school teachers in competing with state schools. The fact that a number of graduates succeeded in their next schooling level was likely a bonus of which the school could be proud, hence it was not used to promote the school. Putri indicated that the parents would not make the results of the national examination as a determinant in choosing a state school.

5.2.3 It is not fair

A sub-theme emerged from the analysis of the interview data which indicated that seven teachers in this study had fairly negative perspectives of the examination as they believed that this high-stakes test created bias among the students. Six reasons were suggested as to why the examination was not perceived to be fair: three years' learning was determined by a four day examination, every school had different resources, the examination failed to assess the students' competence, a low achiever could gain a higher score than a high-achiever in the examination, students' well-being during the examination influenced the students' performance and 'it's not transparent'.

Three year learning is determined by four day examination

Two teachers considered the national examination as unfair as three years of students' progress in learning was judged in a four-day examination. The following statements highlighted the teachers' negative perceptions.

“Learning in three years is determined by four days [the national examination]” (Nopi, individual interview, p.9);

“Students' success doesn't depend on the national examination. They've been studying from the first, second to the third grades. What is the use of studying for three years if the decision is solely determined by four days [of national examination] only?” (Husna, individual interview, p.10).

The statement above indicated that the students' learning within three years in the junior secondary school would be of no use as their future was determined by the examination. While the government intended to reduce the pressure by implementing a policy whereby the results of the examination were not the sole determinant for students' graduation, Nopi and Husna's statement showed that the stakes for the examination were still high. They perceived that the examination played a bigger role than three-

years of learning. Nopi and Husna suggested that the teachers criticised the examination as it led the stakeholders to believe that gaining knowledge by learning in the classroom was not as important as gaining high scores in the examination. They contested the examination as the learning in three years did not contribute to the success in the examination. Nopi and Husna perceived that the examination carried high-stakes for individuals especially for the students. The examination appeared to play an important role as a placement test that determined which educational track students could enter or to which school they would be admitted. It was an interesting point of view as the statements above suggested that there was no link between what had been taught in the classroom and what was tested in the examination. What was tested in the examination possibly was not fit to the curriculum designed to be taught in the classroom (presented further in 5.3). An examination that was not fit for purpose possibly led Nopi and Husna to have a perspective of the examination as unfair.

Every school has different learning resources

As schools' resources varied, this meant the examination was considered to create gaps between schools. Three teachers in the interviews believed that because of the different resources available to each school, schools with more limited resources offered reduced opportunities to the students. Teacher numbers, the socioeconomic context and school location all had the potential to influence scores gained in the examination. They reported:

“Not all of the schools have the same human resources, as the teachers or even the students, the potential is not similar. Then the facilities that the schools have are not the same, and the geographical position is also not the same, but when they have the national examination, they have the same test; it's generalized, so it seems unfair” (Mahmud, individual interview, p.3-4);

“The schools have different facilities, [therefore] the output of this private school and the state school differs” (Indri, individual interview, p.10);

“The students are asked to overcome the questions that are not made by people living in this area...The students at this school need to pass the national examination. So we as teachers are required to try...Can you imagine the national examination – made nationally and applied all over Indonesia – is taken by those who are in the urban areas with abundant facilities, and also taken by those who are in suburban areas who can't afford to buy books? So, there's a huge gap” (Putri, individual interview, p.5-6).

The statements above provided the insight that the students most affected by the examination were those who were in schools in remote areas with insufficient learning facilities. Such schools failed to provide sufficient learning support for the students to be successful in the examination as they did not have the resources to do so. This perception led to a belief that the students who studied at such a school could not compete with those who were from prestigious schools with resources to provide abundant learning facilities. Indri's statement above also showed that a private school had disadvantages compared to a state school. Indri's experience in teaching at a private school led her to perceive that a private school especially a low-cost school like her workplace had more shortcomings than a state school. She believed that students at a private school could not gain scores that were as high as students at a state school.

Mahmud, Indri and Putri believed that the weaknesses found in many schools in suburban or remote areas could be directly attributed to a lack of resources (financial and human capital). They perceived that the more capital a school had the more advantages it could gain toward the examination. Geographical locations, learning facilities and capital were among the elements perceived to create a belief among three teachers that the examination created gaps between schools. Given the reality that the schools in Indonesia did not have similar standards in regards to those three elements, the fairness of the examination was also contended.

It fails to assess the different potentials the students had

Fera identified a further factor that she believed was significant in examination success: students' potential. Fera who taught in a high-cost private school argued that the government failed to assess all the potential that the students had. She said:

“It (The assessment system) doesn't have any concern to other skills, it doesn't care the way how the students learn; their visual, motoric or audio ability. The government only thinks about how they deliver the national examination; so the children need to do it. The national examination indeed pressurizes the children who are not academically good. They are not free to study the subjects based on their interest” (Fera, individual interview, p.9).

Fera believed that the examination failed to assess the potential that the students had as there were only four subjects tested in the examination (as described in Chapter 2, section 2.3). Her statement indicated a perception that a student could be particularly strong in a specific subject but weaker in other subjects. Fera perceived that the examination failed to evaluate the students' varied potentials and interests. Her

statement above provided a view that the examination appeared to ignore the subjectivity of each student. The issue emerging from the statement above was that the decision of the government to test only four subjects in the examination disregarded the fact that each student had different potentials. A student who was good in sport for example was at a disadvantage as he could not do well in the examination as the examination did not test sport.

The students at Fera's school who found learning more challenging were believed to be those most affected by the examination. Fera claimed that Indonesia was supposed to adapt other countries' education systems as she said, "Compared with the system applied in another countries, they might be free to choose". She believed that the education system outside Indonesia provided a relatively fair assessment system for the students as they were free to choose subjects based on their interests. Fera's statement suggested that the students were driven by the examination and left them with no choice other than to do well in the examination even though it did not suit their interests.

A low achiever could gain higher scores than a high achiever in the examination

Two teachers – Mahmud and Husna – made reference to the unsatisfactory nature of the examination. They suggested that many of the students' scores contradicted their professional judgement of their students' abilities. Mahmud drew attention to "a student who was lucky in the examination but wasn't very good based on the day-to-day mark". Mahmud perceived that the examination did not reflect the students' competence as his student whom he believed to be academically below average could gain higher scores than the students who relatively gained good scores in the classroom tests. The examination seemed to be discriminatory for the academically good students as it put them in a disadvantageous position. However, Mahmud's statement seemed contradictory with his previous positive perception of the examination as beneficial in assessing students' competence (5.2.1).

The perception of the examination as unfair in regards to the students' abilities was also mentioned by Husna who stated that,

"We know our children better, we know their abilities. There are a number of people who were lazy to study but they got high score in the national examination. In the contrary, the people who studied thoroughly, but the score of the national examination was average" (Husna, individual interview, p.6).

The statement above suggested that the examination was not valid for evaluating the students' competence as the students who were academically low could gain high scores in the examination. Husna believed that the examination failed to show its usefulness to provide information on students' achievement. There was a strong belief that the students who were demotivated in studying were not supposed to do better in the examination as Husna suggested that she had assessed her students' abilities. Her experience in teaching the final year students confirmed that studying hard contributed to success on the classroom indicated by the scores gained in the classroom tests. However, Husna had to face a contrasting phenomenon as she found out that being a motivated or demotivated student in studying did not lead to success or failure in the examination. It was contradictory to her teaching experience in the classroom. She found it unfair for the students who spent more time in studying but gained lower scores than those who spent less time in studying. It indicated that the time the students spent in studying the examination was not reflected in the results of the examination. What comprised a fair examination was then contested.

Students' well-being during the examination can influence their performance

In addition, Putri indicated that the scores gained in the examination "might be caused by several factors; starting from the students' preparation, their emotional condition, and then probably their physical condition". She suggested that the results of the examination might not represent the students' academic achievement as the students' well-being also determined the students' performance in the examination. An academically good student who had just recovered from illness for example, sat the examination and then gained low scores was punished by the four-day examination. Putri clearly showed that the scores gained in the examination did not truly reflect the students' competence.

It is not transparent

Endang who taught in a medium-cost private school also expressed his negative perception of the examination. He was concerned about the dependability of the examination results:

"it's not transparent. Where is it checked? Is it checked or not? There's a rumour that the answer sheets are directly put in the bin since it's huge in numbers. But the information is still gossip, it's not a fact. If it is the provincial government who checks the national examination, it's supposed

to be published publicly the way how it's checked, what the result is and so on" (Endang, individual interview, p.10).

Endang complained about its scoring system as it was run at local government level not at a school level. He believed that its non-transparent system did not show that the students' work in the examination was checked properly. The marking procedure was not transparent and he seemed to blame the government. The fairness of the examination was again contested as the government failed to provide a transparent system for marking the examination. Although the rumour Endang stated could possibly be true, his statement however was weak since he could not prove that the government randomly put scores on the students' report without marking their work in the examination.

5.2.4 It needs improvement

This sub-theme presents the teachers' perceptions that improvement in the examination system was required. Two suggestions to improve the system emerged from the analysis were that the government needed to treat state and private schools differently and that the assessment of learning should be implemented.

'Treat us differently'

In order to aim for equity between students of state and private schools, Indri suggested that:

"The schools have different facilities, the output of this private school and the state school is different. But how come the graduation needs to be the same? ...The questions in the examination should be different between the private and the state schools" (Indri, individual interview, p.9-10).

Since there was a gap of learning quality between private and state schools, Indri believed in creating fairness among the students with different learning resources, and argued that the examination should be designed differently for students at state and private schools. The current examination system denied many students an equal opportunity. The disparity between state and private schools could be minimized by offering different levels of examination based on the learning resources available to each school. Private schools should have easier examination than the state schools as Indri perceived that the academic ability of the students at private schools was relatively lower than those who were in a state school.

The urge to implement Assessment of Learning

To aim for a fair assessment system among students, two other teachers proposed an illustration that may have matched the Assessment of Learning. Instead of focussing on the examination, Husna expected that the graduation should be based on the learning within three years at the junior secondary school:

“The government is supposed to determine the graduation based on their day-to-day learning process; from the results of the practical tests then their attendance” (Husna, individual interview, p.6).

Nopi thought similarly to Husna, believing that graduation should be based on the students’ performances beginning from their first year of learning, to their second and third. She said, “To graduate or not - it’s supposed to be accumulated starting from the first semester until the sixth [semester], then the score is accumulated from all of them”. Husna and Nopi suggested that the results of the examination would not be of use in supporting learning as it was administered at the end of the student’s learning. Instead of focussing on the external examination as the examination, they suggested that assessment system that could be used to promote learning and should be applied in the classroom.

The government needed to consider not focussing the examination as an entrance ticket for the next level of schooling. The examination should have been a lower priority than focus on learning. The implementation of the examination exposed a range of difficulties and challenges perceived by the teachers. The students’ scores were used to make decisions about their future educational trajectory was unfair for students who were disadvantaged regarding geographical location and learning resources.

Discussion of (5.2) Teachers’ views of the examination

Overall, the teaching participants in this study had different opinions about the examination. Their responses were varied between negative and positive aspects of the examination.

One teacher (Mahmud) agreed with the purpose of the examination as a means of evaluating the students’ competence as it was supervised by other teachers which guaranteed integrity in the treatment of students. Interestingly, he later also criticised the validity of the examination as the scores gained in the examination did not reflect the students’ competence. He believed that a low-achiever could gain higher scores than

someone whom he believed to be a high-achiever. Mahmud's statement indicated that there was a possibility that high academic ability might not contribute to success in the examination. This finding indicated opposite results with a study conducted by Mukminin et al. (2015). Their interviews with 15 English teachers in Jambi, Indonesia, to explore their perceptions of the national examination suggested that the participating teachers had a positive reaction to the examination. They perceived that the examination was fit for purpose in evaluating the students' competence as the students' ability influenced their success or failure in the examination. Their findings contradicted this analysis of Mahmud's and Husna's data which identified that the students' success was not likely to reflect the students' ability.

The analysis of the data also provided evidence about the teachers' perceptions that the examination had a positive effect on motivation for learning. Four teachers shared a similar opinion that the examination had positive influence on the students' learning. However, their opinions indicated that the students required external motivation to learn. The findings suggested that the students seemed not to have internal motivation to learn for the examination. The examination was then believed to have a positive impact on the motivation for students to learn. Putri who was the only state school teacher in this study motivated the students to gain high scores in the examination by promising to reward those with perfect scores. Although she claimed that her intention was to motivate the students to learn, the fact that she belonged to a family in which others had a similar profession to hers could possibly be another factor that meant Putri would spend her own money on the students. The competition among certain schools in gaining high scores in the examination also appeared to be one of the factors in Putri's decision.

The results of the examination were also used to evaluate teaching performance, which created pressure for two teachers in this study. The findings indicated that the school principals where the teachers worked seemed to associate the scores gained in the examination with the teachers' success in the classroom. The schools had a tendency to evaluate the accountability of the teachers through the results of the national examination. A good or successful teacher was therefore reflected in the results of the national examination. It was described by Endang who stated that his school principal considered replacing the mathematics and science teachers due to the low score gained by most students in the national examination. Endang indicated that the teaching performance was one of the factors that contributed to the scores gained by the students

in the examination. This study illustrates the argument stated by Barksdale-Ladd and Thomas' (2000: 386) in the context of the assessment system in the USA that:

“School-by-school, district-by-district, and state-by-state comparisons published in local newspapers coupled with tremendous pressure to produce high test scores from administrators, school boards, and state legislators make testing the focus of teacher thinking about instruction.”

Endang's description showed that the result of the national examination was not only the focus of the teachers but also the school principal. Evaluation by the school principal of the teachers was linked to the students' achievement in the national examination. It was apparent in the data that the school principal in Endang's school placed more pressure on the teachers in regards to the results of the national examination. A school principal would then rely on the scores gained in the national examination heavily to evaluate, reward or remove teachers who taught final year students. This was evidence that the school principal motivated the teachers to improve students' scores as their practices were evaluated or monetarily rewarded for the scores gained by students.

The perspective that the results of the examination were used to promote more admissions to the school was suggested in the analysis. Three private school teachers shared similar concerns that parents considered the school's reputation was based on the scores gained in the examination. The feelings and the perceptions that the teachers showed in the interviews could possibly influence their teaching practices in the classroom.

Meanwhile seven teachers agreed that the examination created bias in favour of some teachers, students and schools. The fact that each school had different learning resources led teaching participants to believe that the examination was not fair. The examination also failed to provide equity among students who had learning interests different from or outside the subjects being tested in the examination.

Three teachers later suggested that the urge to improve the examination system. One private teacher believed that the current policy gave disadvantages for the private schools as she believed that the quality of state and private schools was different. She indicated that the state school could perform better in the examination due to the fact it had sufficient learning resources. She appeared to suggest that the government should administer a less challenging examination system for the private schools. Meanwhile, two other teachers believed the national examination was a proper means of assessment

of learning. They wanted an assessment system that provided assessment of learning through three year learning. They indicated that the students' evaluation had to start within three years of their learning at school.

Interviews with the teachers in this study suggested that they stressed students' success in the national examination as their goal in the teaching process in the final year classroom. For teachers, the results of the examination were perceived as being used to evaluate their teaching performance. The school reputation was perceived to depend on the results of the examination, especially by the private school teachers in this study (section 5.2.2). The examination seemed to have important consequences for the teachers whose careers might be affected by how successful their students were sitting the national examination. This phenomenon may lead the teachers to "do things they would not necessarily otherwise do" as a washback effect of a high-stakes test such the national examination (Alderson and Wall, 1993: 117).

Fera who worked in a high-cost private school also clearly showed that the results of the national examination were her main concern. The private school where Fera worked created a slogan "succeed in the national examination" so the atmosphere was likely to be intense for the teaching staff and the final year students. She believed that the school reputation relied on the results of the national examination. The expectation that her students could once again gain the highest scores in the national examination among 18 other junior secondary schools in the previous year drove the school principal and teaching staff to focus on exam preparation in the classroom. As their professional accountability was at stake, the teachers reminded the students how their future depended mainly on the national examination so the students would have felt the pressure especially in the classroom. This finding is consistent with Fadel's (2016) description of the governor of Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, granting an award the students who gained the highest scores in the national examination in the region. The results of the national examination were published and could be accessed by public, which put the teachers on greater pressure on the teachers under the testing regime. Fera's school was among those which gained the highest scores in the 2015 national examination and this seemed to contribute to the school's intention to focus more on preparing the students for gaining high scores in the examination.

Putri, from a family with several teachers, motivated her students by offering prizes to those who gained a perfect score in the English test of the national examination (as described in point 5.2.1). The willingness of Putri to use her own money to reward

those who gained perfect scores in the English test of the national examination seemed to refer to an act of collectivism. Matsumoto (2009: 118) stated that in collectivism “self-sacrifice for the sake of the in-group is frequent”. Putri’s decision to reward the students could be possibly a sign of self-sacrifice that Putri did for the sake of her family. Although Putri did not show shame of students failing in the examination as Nopi and Mahmud experienced, her encouragement of her students indicated that the importance of a high score was related to the belief that she belonged to a family of teachers and made the family as one of her personal priorities. This finding is consistent with Gandana and Parr’s (2013) argument that stated factors like teachers’ life experience and background influenced the decisions they made in the classroom. Their interview with an Indonesian teacher (Nancy) explored how she perceived the influence of the sociocultural and biographical contexts on her teaching practices. Their results showed that:

“To project an image of a respectful and conforming member of the institution (i.e. to be a ‘saint’), Nancy confessed, she must suppress her own teacherly and academic voice (i.e. thus avoiding being seen as a ‘sinner’) and ‘agree’ with her senior’s views” (Gandana and Parr, 2013:241).

The good for the family and society was likely deemed more important than achieving professional goal. The family background could also possibly influence Putri to spend her money to maintain her family respectable. Her decision might be against her professional goal, but she appeared to prefer putting family and school reputation as the priority. The family background could also possibly have influenced Putri to spend her money to maintain her family respectability. Her decision appeared to show that she put family and school reputation as the priority.

The inability of the government to ensure fairness in the national examination was what seven teachers in this study criticized. A number of factors including students’ physical and emotional conditions could influence performance during the examination. Two teachers in this study believed that the learning across three years should be the major factor in the evaluation of students’ learning. A high-stakes examination was perceived to offer narrow information on many aspects of learning and thus it led to unfairness as stated by Husna and Fera. Mahmud also suggested that there was an indication that the national examination inaccurately measured students’ potential for success. The finding from teachers’ interviews suggested that the teachers believed that the use of the national examination was rather to gain access to the next schooling level than to support the students in gaining further knowledge on how to learn. The national

examination failed to overcome local differences in school resources and learning facilities. This result was consistent with the findings of another study conducted in Indonesia (Sutari, 2017). The difference in resources that each school had in Indonesia was also perceived by an English teacher participated in Sutari's study to explore teacher's perception of the national examination. The difference led that the teacher also to perceive the examination as unfair.

5.3 Teaching final year students

In regards to teaching the final year students, the teaching participants were asked about the challenges they had in teaching them. During the interviews, there was discussion as to whether or not there were any modifications which they made to the classroom practice as a result of the examination. Four sub-themes emerged in the data analysis and were categorised as (5.3.1) Classroom management challenges, (5.3.2) Teaching goals, (5.3.3) Teaching guidelines, and (5.3.4) Exam - preparation activities.

5.3.1 Classroom management challenges

In this sub-theme, the analysis of the interview transcripts focussed on exploring the challenges that the teachers experienced in teaching the final year students. Seven teachers perceived it as more challenging and one as less challenging than teaching Year 7 and 8, and their views are discussed in the following two sub-sections.

More challenging

Seven out of eight teachers had similar answers that the final year students were the most challenging to be managed compared to the students from Year 7 and 8. Challenges reported focussed around the increasingly more inquisitive minds of the younger generation and students' misbehaviour, which interviewees attributed to the students' transformation into teenagers.

The current ninth graders have very inquisitive mind. They keep complaining if there is something that doesn't match with what I've explained before. Then I have to explain it one more time" (Fera, individual interview, p.4).

Fera's statement above showed that she found it challenging to teach final year students as she needed more work and time to explain issues which had been raised by them. Fera's students would not hesitate to enquire about any issue that they found even if it contradicted Fera's previous explanation in the classroom.

Two participants in this study offered an explanation suggesting that classroom management in the final grade was challenging as the students were more likely to misbehave. Husna said that “the ninth grade is when children transform into teenagers” and that this transformation led students to have “juvenile delinquency, they start to misbehave” (Mahmud). The juvenile delinquency mentioned by Mahmud referred to several acts of the students which were not allowed at their age for example, smoking or drinking. Such actions were perceived to be wrong yet their behaviour did not include in breaking the law. The term “misbehave” used by Mahmud referred to the change in the students’ behaviour from obedience to disobedience. Husna and Mahmud identified that there was a psychological change in the final year students which they found caused their students to act in ways they had not habitually acted. The situation led Mahmud to hold the opinion, “If the teachers teach them more hardly, instead of following the teachers, in fact they disobeyed the teachers, they rebelled”. This change led the students to behave irresponsibly so Husna and Mahmud found that teaching final year students was the most challenging in their experience.

Mahmud provided an example of how the final year students behaved, “Towards the teachers, they sometimes are brave to harass the teachers.” He then illustrated his final year students’ state of emotion:

“They are in their puberty, they are looking for their own identity so it makes them to be labile, then their emotion is easy to be triggered; causing their emotion is easy to be teased” (Mahmud, individual interview, p.5).

Mahmud indicated that the challenge he experienced in teaching the final year students lied on the emotional factor that the students had. Their emotional factor then led the students to misbehave to the teachers. Mahmud also stated that at his school, “There are lots of students who missed class in Year 9.” Husna gave a similar description of the students’ neglect of the importance of learning as when the class would begin, “there are lots of them (students) who stay outside of the classroom”.

One of the reasons that the final year students were likely to do what they were not supposed to do came from parenting issues. Mahmud later assumed that the parents of his students, “don’t even care whether their children graduate or not.” His statement suggested that the parents tended to put the responsibility for teaching the students on the teachers. Husna and Indri also echoed that the lack of students’ motivation to learn was triggered by the fact that students lacked support from their parents. Husna reported

that, “their parents care little about their children” while Indri stated, “they don’t get any motivational drive from their parents”.

The statements from Mahmud, Husna, and Indri indicated that some teachers believed that parents did not consider that their involvement in academic progress was an important element for their children. The parents appeared to trust fully that the schools had provided satisfactorily lessons so they did not find it necessary to get involved in their children’s learning. However, the teachers believed that the parents’ involvement influenced how the students behaved in the classroom. They perceived that the more parents were actively involved in their children’s learning, the better behavior the students would show in school.

Mahmud later suggested that, “for the girls, soon after they graduate, they will be wedded by their parents⁵”. The parents of daughters preferred holding an underage marriage rather than providing access for their daughter to the next level of schooling. There was a tendency on the part of parents not to send their daughter to senior secondary level. This was in line with the OECD report’s (2018) finding that 51% of young women in Indonesia did not attain senior secondary education. Mahmud’s description indicated that there was discrimination in families between boys and girls which meant girls had a tendency to have early arranged marriages while the boys could continue their studies. It suggested that the teachers at low-cost schools such as Mahmud’s experienced more challenges in teaching the final year students as they had to give the students, especially girls, more encouragement to learn. The awareness of the reality that the girls at Mahmud’s school had to face after they finished the examination led them to be discouraged from learning at school. However, the interview failed to explore the proportions of boys and girls who misbehaved in Mahmud’s classroom. If the numbers were relatively balanced or there were more boys who misbehaved, the fact that the girls would likely have an underage marriage was not the only reason for the students to lose their motivation to learn in the classroom and show the negative behaviour as perceived by Mahmud.

The following statement clearly described another three reasons for the misbehaviour of students:

⁵ Early and/or arranged marriage is still found in Indonesia although the Indonesian Marriage Law of 1974 set the minimum age for females to marry as 16. It is still a custom for parents in a number of areas in Indonesia to ‘marry off’ their daughters without consulting them (Heaton et al., 2001; Jones, 2001).

“Since the education of the most parents is low, then their economic status is low, and there are a number of students who come from broken home family” (Mahmud, individual interview, p.6).

The lack of attention by parents to students’ activities at school was perceived to be caused by the educational background, the socioeconomic status and family structure of the parents. The statement above suggested that parents with low educational levels, low socioeconomic status and who had a ‘broken’ family structure contributed to the negative behaviour the students showed during the classroom practices.

What also emerged from the analysis of the data was the teachers’ belief that the final year students had no awareness of the importance of the examination for their future. Four teachers who worked at medium- and low-cost private schools believed that the examination had no effect on the students as “they seemed so relaxed” (Nopi); “they don’t feel stressed” (Husna); “they are not afraid of anything, they’re not scared of the teachers; they don’t even care about their graduation” (Mahmud). Indri also shared her concerns: “They don’t even care if the national examination exists or not”. The neutral attitudes that the four teachers believed their students had led to them having a more challenging time in teaching the final year students. They suggested that the students had to be motivated to learn. The motivation was then perceived to affect their attitude towards and awareness of the examination.

Classroom management, in the teachers’ view, was more challenging in the final year due to the examination, students’ misbehaviour and parents’ negligence. The analysis of the findings indicated that the classroom management was not only influenced by the examination. The latter factor was believed to be one reason for the increased challenges that the teachers perceived. The effect of parents’ lack of attention on the students’ activities at school contributed to the negative behaviour the students showed in the classroom. Improving the students’ motivation to learn could be achieved by improving the parents’ involvement in their child’s education.

Less challenging

While seven teachers shared similar responses that teaching the final year students was more challenging, Susan had a different opinion.

“The most difficult class regarding to the class management is the eighth grade because children nowadays become disrespectful towards their

teacher. Sometimes they consider the teachers not as a teacher but as a friend. So for example, if they want to ask a question, they will ask the teacher to move towards the students. It's supposed to be the student who comes to the teacher but they did the opposite action" (Susan, individual interview, p.3).

Susan associated the challenge with the manner that the students had. She believed that the students had to respect her as someone who was older. The way the students treated her showed a lack of respect. She clearly described that the boundary between teachers and students by expecting her students not to treat her equally as her students would treat their friend. She suggested that being a teacher placed her higher in a hierarchy than her students so they should respect her position.

5.3.2 Teaching goals

Comments on the purpose of the teaching and how it was influenced by the examination were categorised under sub-theme: Teaching goals. This sub-theme included perceptions on how the examination was connected to the teachers' goals in teaching the final year students. Five teachers' responses were split between two perceptions: four of them believed that their purpose of teaching was to prepare for the graduation and the other said her teaching was to prepare for the examination.

To prepare for the graduation

Four teachers made specific reference to the importance of the students' graduation. They believed that teaching the final year students was still the most challenging part, as the students, said Indri, had "to be prepared from the beginning [of the semester] for their graduation". The purpose of their teaching was therefore not to help them to make progress in learning but to prepare for their graduation so they could pass both the school and national examination that determined the students' graduation. Nopi echoed Indri's statement, "As an English teacher whose subjects are tested in the national examination, I'm obliged to graduate my students". The examination that was used to indicate the students' completion appeared to make Nopi feel a responsibility to help her students graduate. Fera also emphasized that "the important thing [in teaching final year students] is the result". Husna had a similar opinion that her teaching goal was "focussed on how to make them graduated". Concerned teachers in this study turned their teaching goal into ensuring their students obtained the necessary results to graduate.

To prepare for the examination – National examination

Putri expanded the reference that the goal in teaching final year students was different from the goals of the previous levels.

“The seventh graders only face the test before they go to the next grade which questions are still made by us, then the eighth graders are the same. But for the ninth graders, they will face the national examination” (Putri, individual interview, p.4).

She showed that the difference between school tests and the examination was that the school test was a low-stakes test while the examination was a high-stakes test. The difference in the teaching goals for the final year students lay in the fact that they would sit the examination. There was a tendency to no longer aim to teach the students but rather to teach for the examination. Putri indicated that her goal for teaching final year students was focussed on teaching to the national examination.

5.3.3 Teaching guidelines

This sub-theme covered the guidelines that the teachers selected in teaching the final year students. The interviews showed that the teachers’ opinions were split among three types of views on their teaching guidelines. Three teachers linked teaching to the syllabus; two other teachers suggested that they used both the syllabus and the guidelines for the examination. The rest indicated that they referred their teaching to the guidelines of the examination. Syllabus in this section refers to the curriculum aspects and skills to be considered in the teaching and designing of lesson plans by the teachers. Syllabus of English subject for example includes four skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Meanwhile, the guidelines of the examination emphasized what would be tested in the national examination so the classroom practices would focus less on speaking skills, as speaking was not tested. The following three sub-sections explore the different perceptions of these three groups.

Based on syllabus

Three teachers in this study believed that they referred their teaching practices to the syllabus.

“I myself tend to teach based on the syllabus. Though probably the vision and mission or anything in the questions presented have different levels than

those that are in the textbook or shown in the teaching material” (Mahmud, individual interview, p.6).

The phrase ‘questions presented’ that Mahmud referred in this statement related to the national examination. He indicated the possibility that the contents he gave to the students could be different from the questions which appeared in the examination. Endang similarly preferred to teach the students based on the syllabus. He said, “we still refer to the fixed syllabus, the lesson plan that I designed”. Endang suggested that the examination did not lead him to alter his teaching materials. Husna also stated that she taught based on “the content of the textbook” in her classroom which was based on the syllabus for Year 3 of junior secondary school. She indicated that the textbook contained the guidelines that the teacher had to follow in teaching the students. The teachers’ responses above suggested that the materials for the national examination would be different with the materials taken from the syllabus and the textbook. There was a tendency that the national examination items were not only taken from the syllabus for Year 3.

Mahmud later stated that it was his decision to make the syllabus his guideline in teaching the final year students.

But if we give to the students directly or instantly as the material for the national examination, the student might not be able to have the knowledge; they only gain something practically about how to do the national examination (Mahmud, individual interview, p.6).

Mahmud’s statement above indicated that the focus of teaching to the test was only effective for helping the students gain high scores in this standardized examination. The students would not have knowledge that would be of practical use to them or as life-skills if he preferred teaching to the examination.

Endang and Husna reported that school principals became involved in influencing their classroom practices. Endang’s school principal ordered him “to finish the material and the lesson plan for the ninth graders first,” before he held exam-preparation activities. Endang suggested that his school principal instructed the implementation of exam-preparation activities after students finished the national-based school examination; this other low-stakes examination tested all subjects, thus determining students’ graduation. Its implementation was carried out primarily before the examination was administered, based on the decision made by the Education Board within the local area of the school.

Husna echoed Endang's statement that her decision to less focus on preparing for the examination in the classroom was because "the school principal prohibited us [the teaching staff] to discuss the past examination papers within the school hours". Husna's statement implied that although she preferred teaching the students based on the guidelines for the examination, she was under the principal's order to teach the students based on the syllabus.

Using both syllabus and examination guidelines

Two teachers believed that they worked across the syllabus and the guidelines for the examination in their classrooms. Indri, for example said:

"Since the class for the English subject is twice a week, so the first meeting in a week I teach based on the syllabus, the other meeting I use it to discuss the questions [of the previous national examination]" (Indri, individual interview, p.5).

Indri's statement above showed that she moved between syllabus and past examination papers in the classroom. Susan also had a similar experience as Indri since she used both the contents of the syllabus and the examination in teaching the final year students in the second semester.

"In the second semester, I teach the material by following the syllabus, but its delivery was compressed at the beginning of the semester. After the material finished, I start the practical session for discussing the exam-like questions" (Susan, individual interview, p.4).

Besides noticing the importance of teaching the students according to the syllabus, Susan was also aware that the syllabus was insufficient to help the students have better preparation for the examination. She then decided to shorten the time allocated to delivering the syllabus at the beginning of the second semester. After she considered that the syllabus had been delivered, she then preferred to teach to the test.

Based on guidelines of the examination

Three teachers responded on how the examination led them to modify their teaching syllabus. The teachers were supposed to follow the syllabus designed in regards to the school-based curriculum or 2013 curriculum. However, as the content of the syllabus described in the textbooks also covered parts that were not tested in the examination, they preferred to neglect the content of the syllabus and linked their

teaching to the directions given in the guidelines of the examination. Putri stated what she did in the second semester of the final grade:

“In facing the national examination, the first thing we look is the guidance; which material that will appear in the national examination; which SKL⁶ that needed to be delivered” (Putri, individual interview, p.4).

In order to help the students be well prepared, Putri preferred to use the guidelines of the national examination as the guidance on teaching the final year students. Nopi echoed Putri’s statement that she also used the guidelines of the examination as her guidance on teaching the students in the second semester. Nopi neglected the content of the syllabus when teaching her students in the second semester because the content of the syllabus, as she believed it, “had been given in the eighth grade”. As the syllabus for English covered wider topics taught in seventh, eighth and ninth grades, Nopi preferred using guidelines of the examination since it focussed on what would be tested in the examination. She chose using the guidelines of the examination as “the children can get used to” with the content that would be tested in the examination. By doing so, Nopi believed that the students would be better prepared as the teaching focussed on what would be tested in the examination.

The school where Fera worked chose the main goal of teaching the final year students in accord with its slogan, “getting success in the national examination”. So in the second semester she only focussed on teaching the students to prepare them for the examination. Fera stated that the curriculum staff at her school actively looked for the guidelines of the examination from the first semester so they could decide “which material would be delivered in the classroom”. Statements from Putri, Nopi and Fera showed that their teaching content mainly focussed on the guidelines of the examination rather than on the syllabus. They indicated that if they taught the students based on the syllabus in the second semester, the students would not be well prepared for the examination. They preferred neglecting the syllabus and linking the materials to the guidelines of the examination as it was specifically intended to put more emphasis on the examination. Within the school hours and/or the exam-preparation class, three teachers said that the materials for teaching in the second semester were influenced by

⁶ SKL is a series of criteria designed by the Indonesian Ministry of Education that the students need to achieve (Ministry of Education, 2015).

the examination. The materials used included past examination papers and exam-like questions.

5.3.3 Exam-preparation activities

This sub-theme covers the activities that the teachers did in preparing for the examination. Five activities were identified from the analysis of the data. Six teachers in the interviews stated that they needed to spend more time in the classroom as they had an exam-preparation class called an ‘Enhancement class’⁷. Seven teachers also indicated using past examination papers or exam-like questions. Besides giving the past examination papers, two teachers also delivered Teaching ‘how to beat the test’, two teachers chose Grouping the students and two other teachers applied Vocabulary memorization. The findings are discussed in the following sections.

Enhancement class

Husna’s decision to choose the textbook above the guidelines of the examination in the classroom (as presented in 5.3.3 under sub-section ‘Based on the syllabuses’) was because her school held an exam-preparation class out of school hours. Five other teachers also used the extra time of their teaching as exemplified by the statement by Nopi: “the school’s hour has been extended, there is enhancement class”. The majority said that they started the enhancement class which intensified the exam preparation in the second semester around the beginning of January. This intensive exam preparation was done “before the school bell rung...at 6 to 7 a.m.” (Husna) or after the school “dismissed” (Mahmud). Their statements showed that the examination influenced the teaching time of the participants as they had to spend more hours in the classroom as the schools where they worked held exam preparation classes.

Meanwhile, Susan reported that the enhancement class took place during school hours. Susan described how after she had finished delivering the syllabus, she had exam preparation in the classroom. The school principal was also the motivating factor why Susan needed to teach final year students a greater number of hours in the second semester. She stated that, “the school principal decided to extend the hours of the English subject from four to six hours per week”. Again, Susan indicated that she had to spend two hours more per week in the classroom compared to the first semester under the school principal’s instruction.

⁷ Enhancement class is an additional class held outside the school hours focussed on exam-preparation activities.

On the other hand, as the examination was administered two weeks after the school examination, Endang used the two-week slot for the exam preparation. He argued:

“We think if that time is wasted, it’s such a shame. From that time, the school principal planned to use it for the ninth graders to learn the four subjects. So within two weeks we can discuss the questions of the national examination in the last four years” (Endang, individual interview, p.4).

After the school examination, Endang considered that the students did not have to study the subjects that were not tested in the examination. Therefore, he and three other teachers whose subjects were tested used all the school hours intensively coaching the students for the examination. Furthermore, Endang indicated that his time at school was increased as the final year students also needed to sit try-out tests before the examination. He said the students had to sit try-out tests provided by “the school, local government and provincial government”.

For Indri however, the idea of increasing her teaching time by holding an enhancement class was against the school policy that applied the school hours from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. She shared her concern:

“It’s not because I don’t need it, but we don’t have the time. It’s different with the other schools whose students go home at 1 or 2 p.m. Here, the students go home at 3 p.m. So if we hold enhancement class, they will go home late” (Indri, individual interview, p.5).

Fera who had intensified her teaching practices on coaching for the examination also did not mention spending extra hours in exam-preparation class. As in Indri’s school which was a full-day school (started from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.), the school where Fera worked also indicated that it would be difficult to ask the students to spend more hours in school. When Fera said that there was a student who complained that she had been “exhausted to study in the junior secondary school”, it suggested that holding an enhancement class after or before school hours was not possible.

Past examination papers or exam-like questions

Seven teachers in this study preferred to use past examination papers or exam-like questions as the teaching materials in the exam-preparation activities. With regard to this, Fera described her strategy:

“I only teach them how to do the national examination. Then we evaluate who still doesn’t understand the questions. I spend most of my teaching time to have a chat with the students; to discuss what kinds of questions [covered in the national examination] they think that are still difficult for them to understand” (Fera, individual interview, p.7).

Fera’s statement above suggested that the classroom activities were mainly focussed on the exam materials which she largely considered to be the best method of preparing the students for the examination. She narrowed her focus of teaching to what was tested in the examination and omitted what was not tested.

“We skip the speaking skills. Then in the teaching hours, I might tell them a story, no more than that. Since the materials [based on the syllabus] have been finished, so there’s barely any creativity I put in my practice” (Fera, individual interview, p.8).

The teaching as seen by Fera was exam-like rather than using authentic materials. She admitted paying less attention to the speaking materials as speaking was not included in the examination. Fera’s statement suggested that as she needed to create exam preparation activities in the classroom, she decided to change her original teaching method which she believed should include more creativity to the method that she assumed could help the students be better prepared for the examination. Later she also said, “They seem bored to study”. The repetitive method that Fera applied in the classrooms could possibly cause the students who were relatively good in academic work to feel bored. Her statement indicated that the students lacked interest in the method Fera preferred in teaching.

Putri also shared her approach:

“The important thing is we have additional material to discuss the past exam questions...when I was discussing the questions [in the past examination papers] then they chatted with their friend, I sometimes threw them with a chalk⁸, just to make him aware” (Putri, individual interview, p.4-5, 7).

The examination led Putri to provide more past examination papers to the students. Besides believing that discussing past examination papers was the best method, she also believed that the students were supposed to focus more as she mentioned her dislike of those who did not fully concentrate in the classroom.

⁸ Though throwing chalk or eraser to students can be categorized physical harassment to children based on the Law number 35 year 2014 about Children Protection, such activities are still found in Indonesian classrooms.

The learning support that Indri and Husna preferred was also past examination papers.

In preparing for the national examination, I usually look for the questions of the previous national examination, what I can ask, what should be discussed, what should be explained” (Indri, individual interview, p.8-9).

We discuss more the questions taken from the past paper national examination. The questions were answered then reviewed (Husna, individual interview, p.4).

Susan in the meantime expressed the impetus behind her preference to prefer the past examination papers or exam-like questions. She said, “I just want to make them get used to”. Nopi also echoed Susan’s statement, “If they are used to [review the past examination paper] they can do [the national exam]. That’s the purpose”. The past examination papers or exam-like questions were believed to be the basis for the students to gain understanding of the pattern of the questions in the examination. Both Susan and Nopi perceived that the while the questions were different, the patterns in the examination remained the same.

“So within two weeks we can discuss the questions of the national examination in the last four years” (Endang)

“The material taught in the class is strengthened in the enhancement class in addition to the strategies how to answer the questions” (Mahmud, individual interview, p.8)

Seven teachers in this study tended to ignore the materials that did not contribute directly to passing the exam. However, as the examination was designed as multiple-choice items, it may narrow the learning to means of achieving a high score in the examination only without developing critical thinking. In this study, the rigid teaching, practice and testing of certain skills likely to be included in the examination suggested that the participants had distorted the curriculum.

Teaching ‘how to beat the test’

It was worth noting statements from Putri and Susan. They provided some basic steps in regards to the answer sheet.

“It’s added with tips and tricks how to face such questions...They need to begin from the easy questions...not to blacken the answer sheets first, ...to

mark the multiple choices on the questions” (Putri, individual interview, p.5)

Putri believed that besides giving the past examination papers or exam-like questions to the students, she also needed to provide methods on ‘how to beat the test’. Putri taught guidance that her students needed to follow to perform well in the examination. The phrase “how to face such questions” implied that Putri perceived the similarity of pattern in the questions of the English test. For example, in doing the reading section, the questions probably covered the instructions to locate the main idea of a text. Putri provided her students with the trick of how to choose the right answer for the question by identifying the key terms of the questions and the text. She also coached her students by recommending doing the questions which the students believed to be the easiest. The answer sheet was checked by a computer system which was why Putri reminded her students that “the answer sheet couldn’t be dirty, torn, perforated or folded”. As the answer sheet needed sensitive handling, Putri suggested the students treat the paper as a flimsy object.

In the meantime, Susan recommended her students “not to read the whole text since the time will run out”. She indicated that, if the students spent their time reading the text on the English test, she believed that they could not answer all of the questions. She suggested finding the key ideas of the text rather than reading the text fully.

Providing the students with steps to do the test thoroughly showed that Putri and Susan did their best to help the students for the examination. They indicated the failure of the students in the examination could come during the process of the students filling in the answer sheet. They found it necessary to remind and guide the students on how to fill in the answer sheet.

Grouping the students

The fourth learning enhancement emerged in the analysis of the teachers’ data was the teachers’ intention to put the students in groups.

“I usually put such students in groups. I get them in the same group with the cleverer student. I hope the students would be influenced by the clever one. I give them more attention. If I only explain once to the other students, I will approach those students, to scaffold them (Indri, individual interview, p.8).

Indri’s statement clearly showed her belief that the high-achiever could contribute positively to the low achievers. She perceived that this learning support could affect the

students whom she indicated were academically low. She then assigned the high achievers to help her in teaching the students. Her statement was evidence that she focussed more on the low achievers than the high achievers. The fact that she had probably forty students to teach in the classroom made her give more attention to the low-achieving students as she believed that the high-achievers could do well in the examination. Mixing low-achievers and high-achievers in one group was believed to have a positive impact on the low-achievers as they would gain more help from their schoolmates with relatively higher academic ability.

Focussing more on the students who were academically low was also shown by Fera:

“After the school examination finished, I put the smart students in one group. So I would just pay more attention to those who are still lacks of. I can work together with the students so the pressure is decreased” (Fera, individual interview, p.7).

The different levels of achievement the students had in the classroom led Fera to focus more on the low-achievers. Different from Indri who mixed the low- and high-achievers in the same group, Fera applied another approach. She did not find it necessary to put the low achievers in the same group as the high achievers. She preferred to focus more on the group of low-achievers that she believed were not as ready as the high-achievers for sitting the examination.

Vocabulary memorization

The last method of exam-preparation activity to emerge from the data was the teachers' instruction to make the students memorize English vocabulary. English as a foreign language could possibly create problems in teaching the students for the examination. Two teachers in this study stated that asking the students to memorize vocabulary could contribute positively to their performance in the examination.

“The children [they] have to memorize a numbers of vocabularies, because the questions that appeared in the national examination are the same” (Nopi, individual interview, p.9).

“Sometimes he [the school principal] suggests how if I ask the students why they couldn't do the national examination; what is the most difficult part in studying English. The students answered that they couldn't understand the text, it was hard to be translated. So I told the issue to the school principal. He suggested that I asked the students to memorize five new English vocabularies per day. So they will have quite a number of vocabularies in one semester. So I tried to apply it” (Indri, individual interview, p.6-7).

Nopi and Indri indicated that English vocabulary had great influence on the students' performance in doing the English test of the examination. However their statements provide evidence that learning English vocabulary was not intended to be applied practically. The main purpose for the memorization was related to the examination. They seemed to have no interest in suggesting that the students improve their English skills as a means of international communication.

Discussion of (5.3) Teaching final year students

Overall, findings from this study indicated that the teaching practices in the second semester tended to focus mainly on passing the examination. The evidence in this study seemed to make clear that the scores on the examination (product) were considered to be more important than the process (teaching and learning activities). The teaching practices appeared to aim at the test item and the item format, rather than at constructing or improving the learning process.

The time the teachers devoted in the classroom was mainly to help the students be better prepared for the examination. Six teachers also agreed to spend more hours in the second semester outside their teaching duty for the enhancement classes. The findings suggested that the results of the examination appeared to be the teachers' concern in teaching the final year students. The challenges they experienced in teaching the final year students possibly came from the fact that the students had to sit the examination while the students were demotivated to study for the examination. The findings indicated that the parents did not involve themselves much in the students' learning. To make sure the students were well prepared, the teachers preferred strategic teaching to focus on the past examination papers and exam-like questions. By doing so, they believed that the students were well prepared.

There was a possibility that the teachers would teach their students in a way that was required by the examination. Strategic teaching appeared to be one of the key elements in this sub-theme as most of the teachers believed that they modified their teaching as required by the examination. The strategic teaching that the teachers chose included discussing the exam-like questions and past examination papers in the classroom.

The results of the national examination that could be accessed easily led the school to concentrate their students on improving the school's league table position.

Focussing the instruction on test preparation in the second semester for the final year students was likely to be one of the attempts of the school to maintain its rank in the national examination table. As Assaf (2008: 239) stated “when high-stakes assessments dominate the political and cultural environment of a school, they can have a powerful impact on teachers’ decision-making and teaching practices”.

Reflecting their research about the washback effect of testing in the USA, Barksdale-Ladd & Thomas (2000) indicated that when comparisons of schools were announced by governments, the national examination as high-stakes testing could lead teachers to focus their practices on preparing for the testing. What became clear from the interviews was that the teachers were aware of what was required of them to become effective teachers. In regards to syllabus, the teachers referred to the guidance of the examination to teach the students in the second semester. Three teachers showed that the national examination had no impact on the teaching content as they still implemented the syllabus designed. However, their teaching time was increased as the result of the extra class called enhancement class held outside the school hours. The enhancement class which took place in the second semester mainly discussed past examination papers. One teacher admitted omitting speaking in the classroom as it was not tested in the national examination. This finding related to the results of Saukah and Cahyono’s study (2015). Four out of six English teachers in Malang, Indonesia who were interviewed by them suggested that they focussed more intensively on the national examination in the second semester of the final year.

The Indonesian Act No. 20 of 2003 stated that curriculum is a set of goals and plans, lesson content and materials and means to be used for the implementation of the learning activities. Figure 5-1 below describes how the curriculum was intended to coordinate between the objective of national education and learning. The syllabus was used to design lesson plans and the textbook for classroom delivery. However, the analysis showed that participating teachers perceived the guidance for the national examination was not related to the textbook and lesson plans. The Framework of the 2006 school-based curriculum (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014) defined the textbook as a major learning resource to achieve the basic and core competence of the graduates. Meanwhile, each school would design their lesson plans based on the potential, interest and students’ competence (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014). Two participating teachers who mixed between syllabus and guidelines for the examination and three teachers who referred only their teaching materials to the

guidelines for the examination suggested that the teachers paid less attention to the framework of 2006 curriculum as shown in Figure 5.1. They then considered focussing only on teaching the materials based on the guidance in preparing the students for the national examination, omitting the syllabus, lesson plan and textbook. It was evident that the national examination had a negative washback effect on curriculum. The figure below also describes how the lesson plan and textbook represented the syllabus. However, the findings of this study suggested that the teachers referred only to the students' graduate competence to plan teaching in the classroom and ignored the lesson plan and textbook.

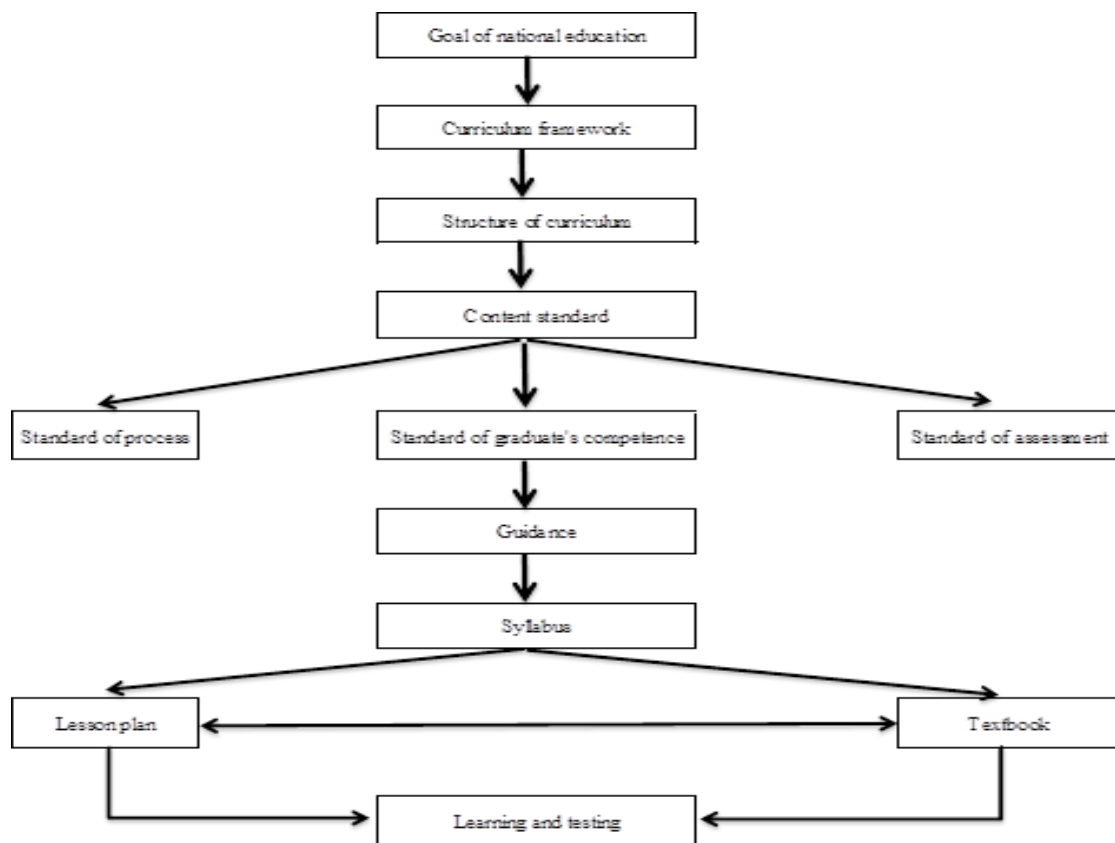


Figure 5-1_Framework of 2006 school-based curriculum (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014: 31)

Furaidah et al. (2015) collected data from eleven English teachers at five senior secondary schools in Malang, East Java, to investigate the impact of the examination on teaching practices. Their findings suggested that the guidance of the examination was more intensively used at a school with relatively low achievers than at schools with high achievers. However, there was no evidence in this present study that the types of schools contributed to the frequency of the teachers in using the guidance of the examination. Three teachers in this study who worked in different types of schools (state, medium- and high-cost private schools) made similar statements in their

interviews that they referred their teaching practices to the guidance for the examination. Meanwhile, two teachers (Mahmud and Susan) who worked in low-cost private schools reported differently. The analysis of Mahmud's transcripts identified his decision to use the designed syllabus as the teaching guidelines while Susan said that she drew on both the syllabus and the guidance of the examination to teach the students in the second semester. This finding suggested that the types of schools did not correlate to the teachers' preferences for their teaching guidelines.

Holding an enhancement class was among the key sub-subthemes that appeared in the analysis of the teachers' interviews. Six teachers in this study stated that they held such exam preparation classes in the second semester. A similar finding was also identified by Sukyadi and Mardiani (2011). Their study involving seven teachers from three secondary schools in Bandung, reported that they held an exam-preparation class that focussed on discussing pass exam papers.

Since most of the participating teachers in this study ended up giving the past examination papers to the students as their teaching materials, they often focussed on reading skills only. They did not seem to have various methods to teach the students. Some teachers possibly shortened the materials based on the curriculum for the second semester to two months only. Based on the academic calendar 2015/2016 published by the Local Educational Office (2015), the length of classroom practice in the second semester was shorter than in the first semester. The first day of school in the first semester started on July 25th and ended December 6th 2015. Meanwhile, the second semester started from January 4th until April 15th 2016. Including public holidays, there were about 20 days difference between the first and the second semesters. As the second semester had fewer days than the first semester, the teachers could possibly decide to intensify their teaching for the examination.

Participating teachers mostly prepared their students for the national examination by reviewing past papers and teaching the topics covered in the test. As the teachers believed that the national examination was distinct from the materials based on the syllabus they had designed, they perceived that the test-preparation was the only control they could exert over test scores. It was a clear indication that the national examination had created a washback effect on the teaching practices and the curriculum. Even though the national examination was aimed at measuring the students' achievement, the teachers considered that the test-items covered in the national examination might not be related to the teaching materials which they were supposed to use based on the syllabus.

They appeared to conclude that there was no relationship between the national examination and learning and so they felt they were not able to integrate teaching and testing in appropriate ways.

As the national examination was designed as multiple-choice items, it may narrow the learning in order to achieve only high scores in the national examination without developing critical thinking. Acquiring knowledge and skills and applying these in real life may not be of interest or the learning goal anymore. Fera in the interview clearly stated her decision to omit teaching speaking skills in the second semester, as speaking was not included in the English test. It also appeared in other studies that teachers were more selective in focussing more on certain aspects that would be tested in a test than on others (Wall & Alderson, 1993; Qi, 2004; Saville & Hawkey, 2004; Watanabe, 2004; Tsagari, 2017). A longitudinal study, examining how washback of national exams impacted on teaching in Sri Lanka, provided insights into the relationship between teachers' perspectives regarding teaching materials and state exams (Wall and Alderson, 1996). Their result showed that "a number of teachers, however, consistently skip over the listening lessons in their textbooks, because they know that listening will not be tested in the exam" (Wall and Anderson, 1996: 216-217). The neglect of speaking in the English class was also suggested by Friska (2015). Three English teachers among nine teachers from three junior secondary schools in Tangerang, Indonesia, who participated in her study focussed on teaching reading in class, as reading was tested in the examination.

Overall, there was a tendency for the national examination to create negative washback on teaching practices. The data from the interviews with the teachers suggested the significant role of the teachers' perspectives regarding the national examination and their test-preparation practices. The interviewees indicated that they fully recognised how the national examination affected their teaching activities. Similar views of the participants about the national examination and its washback effect demonstrated the significant role of the teachers' own perspectives. Specifically, the teachers' beliefs about the assessment system seemed to influence the scope of the washback effect occurring in the classroom. This study showed that teaching quality was perceived to be highly dependent on the results in the national examination.

Summary of Chapter 5

This chapter outlined eight teachers' feelings, views and descriptions of their practices regarding the examination for junior secondary school students in Indonesia. Their responses varied when expressing their feelings about the examination. The change in the regulation of the examination system was accepted positively by three teachers. The current examination system that combined the scores gained in the examination and the school tests as the students' indicator of completion led the examination still to be seen as a high-stakes test. Seven teachers in this study experienced high level of anxiety. Fear of students failing and worry about scores were among the feelings about the examination the teachers stated in the interviews. Besides providing the information on the students' competence, the teaching participants also accepted the usefulness of the examination as the social standard for evaluating the school. Negative feelings were associated with different factors such as the parents' decision to enrol their child in the school being based on the scores gained in the examination. One teacher also showed a feeling a shame as failing students could risk the school's reputation. The national examination continued to cause a high level of anxiety among most teachers.

Interestingly seven teachers in this study showed their doubts about the examination on the grounds that it could not be fair in assessing the students. The varied learning resources and geographical location that each school had were among their protests against the examination. A school in a remote area with limited learning resources and capital could not perform as well as a school with better learning facilities. Performance in the examination was possibly determined by the facilities that the school had. The use of the examination to assess the students' competence was then contested as they perceived that the examination was not fair.

The extra challenges they faced in teaching the students were based on the fact that the students were demotivated in learning while the teachers were aware that the students had to perform well in the examination. The findings suggested that the teachers had to encourage the students to learn as a result of the students' reluctance. Motivation to learn could be interpreted as both a positive impact and negative impact of the examination as the motivation the teachers provided appeared focussed on learning for the examination.

The shame of students failing that two teachers referred to in regard to the examination indicated another factor that could be taken as an insight. Their responses indicated that their awareness of group belonging, within a group of teachers, schools and families, could cause such feelings. The findings suggested teachers believed that they represented a group and they appeared to put the group as their main priority. Throughout the transcripts, the word 'we' frequently appeared. It also indicated the collectivist approach that the teachers took as they responded in the interview not as an individual but on behalf of a group.

The following chapter will present the findings gathered from the focus group discussions with students.

Chapter 6 : Results and discussion of students' focus group discussions in response to the national examination

Overview

Chapter 5 presented the findings from the individual interviews with eight participating teachers. It presents the results of focus group discussions with students aiming to explore the participants' perceptions of the national examination. The participants (final year students) were selected purposively by the participating teachers whose classroom had been informally observed before conducting their interviews. The selection was based on students' academic progress, socioeconomic status and gender. There were four focus group discussions with the numbers participating in each group ranging from six to nine. Twenty-nine students (9 boys and 20 girls) from four junior secondary schools participated in the focus group discussions (see table 6-1 below). The types of private school (state, low-, medium-, and high-cost private) were determined by the facilities that each school had and the condition of the school building. The school type was also determined by the teachers' responses during the interview indicating the ranges of the tuition fee that the private school students had to pay.

School	Type	Gender	
		Male	Female
Armadillo	State	2	7
Savannah	Low-cost private	4	4
Pleasant Hill	Medium-cost private	3	3
Millennium	High-cost private	-	6

Table 6-1_Profiles of focus groups

The analysis of the data was based on the three research questions of this study. The transcripts gathered from four focus group discussions (27 pages) were coded to various terms, for example, fear, stressed, enhancement class, and parents' involvement. The students' responses in regards to a discussion "how do you feel knowing that you will soon sit the examination?" were encompassed in the first theme: *Students' feelings about the examination*. High level of anxiety and mixed feelings were some of the sub-themes under the students' feelings. The second theme: *Students' views about the examination* analysed how the participating students discussed the purposes of the examination. Their answers, for example, "learning across three years is determined by a four-day examination" then became sub-sub themes of the students' views about the examination. A theme, *the influences of the examination on learning practices* was the

last theme of the analysis of the focus group discussion. The analysis categorised their activities at school, home and cram school that could be affected by the national examination. The list of themes, sub-themes and sub-sub themes that emerged in the analysis of the teachers' interviews is outlined in table 6-2. The sections present the main themes and sub-themes which emerged from the analysis. Some key findings are discussed at the end of each section. The chapter ends with a summary.

Themes	Sub-themes	Sub-sub themes
6.1 Students' feelings about the national examination	6.1.1 High levels of anxiety	Fear of having insufficient preparation
		Fear of sitting the examination
		Fear of failing in the examination
		Feeling stressed studying in the final year
6.2 Students' views about the national examination	6.1.2 Mixed feelings	Partly positive and partly negative reaction to the examination
	6.2.1 It is fit for purpose	It determines the students' academic future
		It motivates and drives the students to learn
6.3 The influence of the national examination on learning practices	6.2.2 It is not valid	Three year learning is determined by four day examination
	6.3.1 At school	Narrowing the curriculum
		Reviewing past exam papers
	6.3.2 At home	Preparing for the examination
	6.3.3 At cram school	The importance of attending a cram school

Table 6-2_Themes, sub-themes and sub-subthemes emerged in the analysis of the students' focus group discussions

6.1 Students' feelings about the examination

The members of the focus groups were asked to state their feelings about the examination. Two sub-themes emerged from the analysis: (6.1.1) High levels of anxiety and (6.1.2) Mixed between low and high levels of anxiety. These two sub-themes are discussed in the following sections.

6.1.1 High levels of anxiety

This sub-theme arises from the analysis of the data provided in the students' responses that link the examination with some consequences they would face in the future as a result of failing the national examination. The consequences that they were

afraid could happen created high levels of anxiety among them. The pressure associated with the examination was common to all four groups. Four types of a high level of anxiety emerged from the analysis: Fear of having insufficient preparation, Fear of sitting the examination, Fear of failing in the examination and Feeling stressed studying in the final year.

Fear of having insufficient preparation

This type of high level of anxiety covered the students' feeling of fear that they were not sufficiently prepared for the examination. Six members of the focus groups expressed this feeling.

Farah and Intan from Millennium school shared similar responses, "I'm not ready" when they were asked about their feelings in the context that they would soon have to sit the examination. The phrase "not ready" suggested that they felt that they had too little time to prepare for the examination. The limited-time they had to prepare appeared to be the cause of the fear that they would be insufficiently prepared. The finding suggested that preparation contributed positively to performance in the examination. Farah and Intan indicated that success or failure in the examination was influenced by the preparation they did.

Another issue emerging from the analysis besides the time available was a feeling of anxiety during the preparation. One group member from Savannah school (Nurul) said, "I'm afraid because I think I haven't got enough preparation". She indicated that she felt anxious due to insufficient preparation. Dimas, from the same school, indicated that he was afraid of facing the English test of this high-stakes examination as he found it difficult to understand its vocabulary. Dinda from the Armadillo group also had a similar feeling to that of Dimas since she found English more difficult than other subjects tested in the examination due to the vocabulary. She said, "English is easy, but the vocabulary [is not]". As the language was not used in their daily communication and it was different from their mother tongue (Indonesian), they felt that the time available was insufficient to prepare for the English examination.

Fear of sitting the examination

Two members of the Millennium focus group also discussed their anxiety when they imagined themselves sitting the examination.

Intan said that she was afraid of “failing to blacken the answer sheet.” The fact that she had to fill in “bubble” on the answer sheet in black led her to be scared of failing to do it properly. Although Intan’s response was not explored further, there was a possibility that her anxiety was caused by her teacher’s warning about the process of filling in the bubbles. Putri had reminded her students that the answer sheet should be clean (as presented in Chapter 5, section 5.3.3). The fear of failing to fill in the answer sheet properly put Intan under more pressure before the examination.

On the other hand, Wulan said that she was scared of not being able to “answer the questions” of the examination. She mentioned that she had been “reviewing the materials” of the examination, but she was still scared of failure. There was a possibility that the fear came from the perception that the test items would be different from what she had had in the classroom.

Fear of failing in the examination

The analysis of the data showed that eleven participants from the four focus group discussions showed their fear of failing in the examination.

Eight out of eight participants from Savannah school agreed that the examination made them feel “uneasiness”. The high level of anxiety shown by eight focus group members indicated that they were aware of the fact that they would soon sit the examination.

There was an increase in the anxiety level felt by two members of the Armadillo group in the second semester of their final year. Dina from the Millennium group also stated that she was “afraid” of having low scores in the examination, as it would decide “which senior secondary school” she could enrol in. The use of the results of the examination as the entrance ticket to gain access to the next level of schooling led Dina to feel this fear. One participant from the Pleasant group (Bayu) had thought an option could be to sit an equivalency test, a test administered by the government to provide a second chance for those who gained low scores in the examination. Bayu’s fearful of failure drove him to think about the equivalency test before he sat the examination.

Feeling stressed studying in the final year

Compared to studying in Year 7 and 8, nine members of the focus groups stated that studying in Year 9 was more challenging. While they agreed that they experienced

more challenges in Year 9, three members said they faced different challenges in the second semester.

Two students from the Armadillo school said that studying in the second semester of the final year when they would soon sit the examination, led them to feel strain and pressure. Both of them felt “so stressed” (Fauzan and Nina). Meanwhile, Ida from the Pleasant Hill group stated that the pressure made her perceive the examination as “a nightmare” that she could not dare to experience. Wulan from the Millennium school expressed her expectation, “I wish there were no examination. I want to have a holiday”. A pressure to prepare for the examination could make the students more stressed in the second semester. Dimas also mentioned that the pressure was due to the extra hours he needed to spend at school since there was an exam-preparation class outside the school hours.

However, their state of stress was possibly not caused merely by the examination. Besides stating that examination preparation caused a stressful feeling; Dimas also mentioned his feeling of exhaustion as a result of excessive homework. Gita and Sarah from Savannah and Jasmine from Armadillo also stated that they felt more stressed in the second semester as they had “loads of homework”. Besides stating that examination preparation produced feelings of stress, Gita and Sarah believed that the teachers gave them more homework in Year 9. A large amount of work and the fact that they had to sit the examination led them to believe that the pressure was higher in the final year. Jasmine perceived that the pressure was intense because the homework was not “related to the national examination”. They believed that they had to manage to do homework while they were supposed to focus more on preparing for the examination. This state of affairs caused them to have more pressure in the second semester.

Jasmine also shared a similar wish to have “more time to prepare for the national examination”. She complained that her time was spent mostly in “going to school, doing homework, attending a cram school” and this experience frequently led her to skip her mealtime. When the Armadillo group was asked about the time they usually went to sleep, Angga said, “I sometimes [go to] sleep past midnight.” The tiredness that the students experienced also affected their emotional and physical condition. Dinda, for example, said that she became “moody” when she could be upset easily, without knowing what prompted this. Nina, on the other hand, mentioned that the effect of her condition made her feel to have no motivation “to go to school”.

The stressed feelings that they experienced in the second semester of their final year indicated that they were demotivated to learn due to the greater number of activities they had to do. It appeared that work in the final year led the students to feel that studying then became more challenging than in the previous academic years. The analysis of the focus group discussions indicated that the students experienced more pressure in studying. A large amount of homework and the fact that they would sit the examination seemed to cause the nine members of the focus groups to view studying as a daunting task. They appeared to barely find any joy in learning, as they felt that being a final year student was very exhausting.

“I had to prepare for the enhancement class, for the try-out test, then for the national examination and for the school examination” (Dinda, Armadillo focus group discussion, p.6).

“We want that this semester we have less homework so we can focus on preparing for the examination. Instead of giving homework in the second semester, I want the teachers to give us materials for the national examination only, so we can perform well in the national examination. We don’t have to think for any other subjects except for the subjects tested in the national examination” (Nina, Armadillo focus group discussion, p.6).

The statements from Dinda and Nina indicated that the pressure of schooling in the second semester was higher as a result of having the national examination and homework. Nina suggested that she spent more time doing both homework and preparing for the examination and the situation led her to feel stressed. She believed the pressure could be less if they had no homework in the second semester since she perceived the four subjects tested as more important than other subjects. In her statement, Nina showed that she preferred preparing for the examination of doing homework in the subjects that were not tested in the examination.

6.1.2 Mixed feelings

This sub-theme referred to the students’ responses that mentioned that they were anxious in facing the examination, but at the same time, they also considered that the examination did not entirely dominate their feelings and actions. Three students from three different focus groups suggested having mixed feelings towards the examination.

Fauzan, of Armadillo focus group, expressed two different responses when the groups were asked about their feelings knowing that the examination would soon come. He said, “I feel nervous”. However, then, when he was asked “Does the national examination influence you?” his response was different:

“Not really. I still can play with my friends, though I’m aware that the national examination is coming” (Fauzan, focus group discussion 2, p.5).

His statements suggested that, despite his anxiety, he noticed that the examination did not make him feel under pressure, as he enjoyed playing with his friends. Anas from the Pleasant Hill group also showed his mixed feelings, as he felt “nervous” studying in the final year, as he knew that the examination was getting closer. He then said, “Not really” when asked if the examination had influenced his feelings. Intan, of Millennium focus group, also showed her mixed feelings. She said, “I’m nervous”; then she answered, “Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn’t” when asked whether the intense preparation for the examination influenced her feelings or not.

Discussion of (6.1) Students’ feelings about the examination

The findings in regards to the students’ feelings about the examination indicated that it created high levels of anxiety amongst them. Though three members showed that the examination did not entirely influence their feelings, they also indicated that they were anxious about facing it.

Before the examination, the students felt uneasy because they perceived they were not well prepared for it. During the examination, the group members felt a high level of anxiety as to whether they could do well in the examination or would make technical mistakes in filling in the answer sheet. Fear of failing in the examination was the other source of a high level of anxiety that group members experienced: they feared that they might achieve low scores.

Besides showing their feelings in regards to the examination, members of the Savannah and Armadillo groups also spoke of feeling stressed during the second semester of their final year. The stress they experienced was the result of a large amount of homework, which they had to do until late at night, and the exam-preparation activities that they had to attend outside the school hours. The statement from Nina and Jasmine from Armadillo school that they wished to have more time preparing for the examination indicated that learning for the examination was the main activity they would like to focus in the second semester.

The findings from the focus group discussions also showed that nine students reported feeling more pressure to prepare in Year 9, especially in the second semester, of the junior secondary school which was the year when they would sit the national examination. The national examination was perceived as a high-stakes test as it had a

direct impact on their future. The belief led the students to have a perspective that gaining good scores in the national examination was their major priority in their school education.

In January 2017 (a year after the data for this study had been collected), a new Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture, Muhadjir Effendy enacted a regulation: (Regulation of Minister of Education and Culture number 3 year 2017). The regulation contained guidelines which stated that students were entitled to graduate from a school if they finished all of the levels, gained good scores in regards to attitude and passed the school examination. However, this new applied policy also still adopted the 2015 regulation that the national examination was no longer the sole determinant of the students' graduation. However, the 2015 regulation seemed not to have led to any significant change in the students' feelings. The pressure arising from having to sit the national examination was still experienced by the members of the focus group discussions. All six teachers who participated in the study of Saukah and Cahyono (2015) agreed that the national examination tended to cause the students to have high levels of anxiety. However, it was unclear what symptoms of anxiety the students in their study experienced. This study in the meantime identified that the students indicated four types of a high level of anxiety: fear of having insufficient preparation, fear of sitting the examination, fear of failing in the examination and feeling stressed studying in the second semester. Feeling stressed as experienced by nine members of students' focus groups in this study can be related to Murtiana's argument (2011: 8) that the students who would soon sit the national examination "lose their leisure time and creativity because most of their time now is spent on studying and preparing for the exam".

The perception of the national examination as a high stakes test was related to its use as the means of determining entry to the senior secondary school. As stated in the Indonesian Regulation of Minister of Education and Culture (2015) number 5, the results of the national examination were intended to screen graduates for admission in the next level of schooling. One of the reasons reflected from the findings of anxiety among students towards the national examination was school admission. The students felt particularly stressed and anxious as the results of the national examination would have serious consequences. Preparing for the national examination and a large amount of homework led to students having sleepless nights. The findings suggested that the change that the government made did not lead the perception of the examination as a

high-stakes test changed. Their schools tended to treat the examination as the only factor for the students' graduation.

Overall, the findings of the students' feelings towards the examination suggested that group members who were from four different types of schools (a state school, and low-, medium-, and high-cost private schools) experienced high levels of anxiety about the examination.

6.2 Students' views about the examination

During the focus group discussions, the members were asked to state their beliefs about the purpose of the examination. This theme presents their responses on the benefits and disadvantages that the examination created, based on their experiences. Two major sub-themes emerged during the analysis: (6.2.1): it is fit for purpose and (6.2.2) it is not valid. These two sub-themes are discussed in the following sub-sections.

6.2.1 It is fit for purpose

This sub-theme derives from the students' responses that they saw the examination as having two purposes: it determines their academic future and it drives them to learn.

It determines the students' academic future

Although graduation was no longer dependent on the scores gained in the examination, the students still perceived that the examination was a high-stakes test, since it was used for school selection purposes. This subtheme covers the analysis of the data that associated the students' high level of anxiety with their hope of gaining admission to a particular school. This section also describes the students' preference for their next level of schooling with their location in four different types of school: the state school and the low-, medium-, and high-cost private schools.

All nine participants from the state school decided to enrol in state schools, although they expressed different preferences concerning their individual choice of school. All the seven girls preferred state vocational secondary schools as their next level of schooling, while two male students chose state senior secondary schools. Two girls stated that their decision in favour of a vocational school was based on what they enjoyed. Jasmine said that she wanted to enrol in a bakery major at a state vocational

school. She stated, “I like making cakes. I want later to work in a bakery shop or be an entrepreneur”. Nina, on the other hand, said, “I want to enrol in a state vocational school because I want to choose an accountancy major. Because I like calculating, I want to work in an office or a bank”.

Even though Angga and Fauzan gave different responses to their preferred senior secondary school, they had a similar motive. Members of their families were alumni of the school, so they wanted to enrol in the same school from which their families had graduated. However, the school that Angga chose was also the one his parents had requested. So, he indicated that he was following his parents’ expectation that he would enrol in the school. Meanwhile, Fauzan seemed to be proud that he would study at the state school. He said, “My sister graduated from that school; at the moment, my brother is studying there. So I want to study at that school too”.

Meanwhile, three out of eight students from Savannah junior secondary school indicated that they would continue to study at a vocational senior secondary school in the same academy⁹ as their current school. The low-cost charged for tuition by the school was the reason behind their decision. Bagus said, “Because the tuition fee is cheap” when he was asked his reason to choose to enrol in the same academy. His response was also echoed by the other students who chose the same academy as their current school for their next level of schooling. Gita in the meantime said she had not decided yet as she had two private schools in her mind in which she wanted to enrol: one in the same academy and the other a medium-cost private school.

Meanwhile, Seven out of eight participants from Savannah indicated they did not expect to be seeking admission to a state school. Only one participant (Sarah) said that her desire was to be admitted to a state school. She said, “I want to enrol in a state school, but my parents said I have to keep studying at the same academy”. Karina and Heri said that they had not yet decided on the senior secondary school where they would enrol. There was a possibility that socioeconomic status influenced the preferences for the next stage of schooling as members of Savannah focus groups who were from low socioeconomic status families did not plan to gain admission to a state school.

⁹ Many private schools in Indonesia of different levels of schoolings (nursery, primary and secondary schools) are members together of an academy.

Meanwhile, the members of Pleasant Hill focus group had varied preferences in regards to their next level of schooling.

“I’m afraid the scores I gain in the examination would not be high enough to gain admission” (Nabila, Pleasant Hill focus group, p.1).

Nabila’s statement suggested her awareness that the scores had an impact on school admission. As a state school could require higher scores to have been gained in the examination, she showed her fear of gaining low scores in the examination as it would lead to a failure in gaining admission to a state school. One student in the Pleasant Hill school also mentioned his expectation of admission to a state school. Four other students (Denny, Anas, Ida and Tika) preferred to continue their study in the academy of their current school. The students’ decision was due to its location near to their houses. The accessibility of the school might be a reflection of their parents’ views as well. To reach the current academy from their houses, the students could go on foot while they needed to take state transportation to go to other schools, including the state schools.

“Gaining admission to a senior secondary school depends on the scores I gain in the national examination” (Dina, Millennium focus group discussion, p.1).

“I need to prepare for the examination so I can gain admission to the next level of schooling” (Amalia, Millennium focus group discussion, p.4).

The statements above indicated that Dina and Amalia associated scores with school admission. In the Millennium group, four out of six participants preferred a state senior secondary school. Dina said her reason for enrolling in a state school was because she had a dream of becoming a psychologist. She believed that the state school could increase her chance of enrolling in a university in order to pursue this dream. She said, “If the senior secondary school is good, I will have a chance to enrol in a qualified university as well”. Amalia and Intan also had similar opinions. Although each of them had different school choices, they perceived that a state school which had proper facilities would help them to gain admission to a state university.

By contrast, Farah and Wulan chose a state vocational senior secondary school for their next school based on their interest. Farah liked drawing animation; so she would like to study in a multimedia or animation class in the vocational school. She mentioned that she took a psychology test, and the result showed that her proper future career was

to become a psychiatrist, but this did not interest her. She thought that a career as a movie director would suit her best. Wulan, in the meantime, wanted to become a fashion designer, but she liked everything related to music. She stated that she did not want to study based on her dream but based on her hobby. She believed that the vocational school she chose had the facilities; therefore, she wanted to study at that school.

It motivates and drives the students to learn

This sub-theme represents the students' views on the purpose of the national examination to motivate them to learn. Seven members of the focus groups perceived themselves as having self-awareness of the need to learn for the examination, while seven other members mentioned that the parental involvement drove them to learn.

Even though the students had relatively negative feelings about the examination, seven participants in the discussions identified a positive effect that they perceived. They associated the examination with the motivation to learn. They believed that it was a high-stakes test since it would be used to decide the school to which they could be admitted. Four out of eight students from Savannah indicated that realising the fact that they would soon sit the examination made them "study more" during the second semester of their final year at the junior secondary school. Nina from the state school also stated that her study time was "doubled" by comparison with the previous semester. Wulan shared a similar thought that she had started to "study more recently" since the examination would soon come. The students' realisation that they needed to spend more hours in preparing for the examination could presumably come from their awareness of its importance for their academic and career futures. Dina mentioned that the examination made her realise the need to spend more time "to learn compared to the seventh and the eighth class year." Farah, who was a student at a high-cost private school, expressed her positive perspective that the examination influenced her to study. She said, "I can study for hours until I forget the time." Motivation to learn might have come from the students' higher expectation of enrolling in a more popular school, such as a state school. Thus, the students at a high-cost school might believe that spending more hours learning could help them to gain higher scores in the examination, which would enable them to enrol in the kind of school they hoped.

Besides, Jasmine believed that her parents realised that she had a large amount of homework to do, so they did not want her to feel more pressure. She shared her positive response, “They just said to learn as long as I want. They think that I could get low scores in the examination if I am under pressure”. Dina from the Millennium school noticed that her motivation to study came from herself. She said, “My parents since I was in the seventh year let me do what I want; whether I want to study or not. [They said] It’s also up to you in regards to the scores”. Jasmine’s and Dina’s parents possibly believed that the motivation for their children to learn was supposed to come from their children’s awareness.

The perception that the examination made the students learn could also result less directly from parents instructing their children to learn. The pressure that the participants got from their parents led them to increase their learning time. Seven members of the focus groups gave their views about this. For example, Nina, who studied in a state school, described the pressure she had:

“My parents often remind me to learn and learn. Mama said that my minimum total scores in the national examination should be 30 [out of 40]. I can play but I need to study and my scores should not be low. I can’t imagine how my mom would react if I had low score in the national examination. My mom was very strict. I just can play [on my phone] twice a week and it is limited. So is my watching time. She always asks me to study in my bedroom, to stay there and I can’t get out” (Nina, focus group discussion 2, p.4).

This grievance of Nina showed that her motivation to learn more for the examination was external, coming from her mother. She showed her boredom with studying without having sufficient time for either playing or watching. Her protest at her mother’s behaviour suggested that the examination appeared to drive the students to learn negatively.

When Dimas, Sarah and Anas stated agreed that their parents asked them “to study and not to play”, their statements indicated that they were forced to learn due to the national examination. Bayu also shared his concern for not being able to leave the house in the evening as his mother asked him to study for the examination. The students preferred watching or playing, but they were scared of the punishment they could get. Although it seemed that there was a positive effect of the examination on motivation to learn, the information above from the participants shows that they had to meet stressful

demands that put them in an unpleasant situation and led them to have a partially negative attitude towards learning for the examination. Vania described her mother's routine, reminding her "to study again and again." Believing that the examination was a terrifying step, but it needed to be faced by her daughter made Amalia's mother adopt an additional rule. Amalia said, "If I'm still watching in the evening, my mom will ask me to study." These circumstances suggested that the motivation of the students learn for the examination came not from themselves but from parents who drove them to study. There was a possibility that the parents could give their children punishment if they did not do what they asked. The pressure from their parents did not help them to counter the anxiety they already felt, and it made this worse.

6.2.2 It is not fair

Besides giving positive views on the examination, some participants in the focus groups contested its fairness. Three participants from the focus groups stated that they perceived the examination as unfair.

Bayu (from the medium-cost private school) and Amalia (from the high-cost private school) explained the reason, "Learning in three years was decided by four days [of national examination]". They argued that, though the examination was used to evaluate the students' achievement, it did not correlate with their learning and vice versa. Learning over three years did not contribute to success in the examination.

Dina, the student from the high-cost private school, shared a similar concern, "I'm afraid my stamina was not in good shape so it can badly impact the scores. It seems unfair as we have been learning for three years". The source of the unfairness that Dina perceived was that the condition that she had on the day of the examination could influence her performance and, in the end, it would affect the results she gained. The examination thus possibly did not reflect the outcomes of the learning experiences. However, it is interesting to note that none of the students from the state school and the low-cost private school criticized the fairness of the national examination. Even though their feelings towards the national examination were relatively negative towards the examination, they seemed to have a positive attitude about its value. Neither the three participating students (Bayu, Amalia and Dina) who considered the examination unfair nor any other members of the focus group discussions mentioned that unfairness in the examination might also be caused by difference in facilities and qualities among the

schools, though this point was raised in the teachers' interviews (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.3).

Discussion of (6.2) Students' views about the examination

Overall, the findings showed the focus groups members' positive and negative perceptions of the examination.

The analysis indicated that the Savannah group, who were from low-cost junior secondary school, did not intend to choose a state school for their next level of schooling. While one participant said her dream was to gain admission to a state school, her parents were against her wish. There was a possibility that socioeconomic status influenced the students' preference for the next stage of schooling. The analysis of the Savannah focus group data identified that these students from a low-cost private school tended to choose a low-cost private school for their next school.

The report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and Asian Development Bank (2015) found that students often could not gain access to the school of their choice as the results of their financial disadvantage. Despite the efforts of the Indonesian government to support low socioeconomic status students, the participants from a low-cost private school in this study indicated that they would not be able to benefit effectively. The focus group discussions with the students from two low-cost private schools indicated that the students coming from low-cost private schools might lack the confidence to compete with those who had studied in a state school or an elite private school since they had lower expectations of gaining high scores in the national examination. Heyneman and Stern (2014: 3) also argued that the low-cost private schools were "established in order to provide educational opportunities for those students with low primary exit examination scores, who are unable to secure spaces in public schools".

The report by the Indonesian Central Statistics Board (2016) claimed that students from low-socioeconomic status families had potential similar to that of those who were from middle or high socioeconomic families. Their ability, however, could not be developed fully as their parents had less income to support them. The low-socioeconomic status families were likely to believe that they might be more financially burdened if they enrolled their children in a state school than in a low-cost private school. If the cost of education was too high, it probably discouraged low

socioeconomic status students from going to school. Families with a limited income were likely to prefer a low-cost private school for their children than a state school.

Although their preferences for schools were different, the Armadillo group, who were students in a state school, and the Millennium group, who were from a high-cost private school, stated that they hoped to gain admission to a state school. Meanwhile, the school choices of the Pleasant Hill group (medium-cost school students) varied between a state school and a private school.

While Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2010) claimed that a private school was likely to have more students come from more socio-economically advantaged families than a state school, the members of the Armadillo and Millennium focus groups in this study declared that they preferred a state school. Even though they were from medium to high socioeconomic status families, they appeared to prefer gaining admission to a state school. None of the participants from both groups stated an expectation that they would be admitted to a private school. It may be concluded that this group's assertion was related to their parents' education and income as hypothesized by Davis-Kean (2005). The more educated parents were likely to create stimulating behaviours at home to support their children to gain the required level of achievement. There were possibly two reasons behind their preference. First, the students and the parents believed that a state school had better quality than a private school. This belief might be related to the conclusion of Newhouse and Beegle's (2006) comparative study that state schools had higher quality input and output than private schools as shown on the test scores gain by students at state and private schools. Junior state secondary school students had higher scores in the national examination than those who were in private schools. Second, the students and the parents possibly believed that there were limited numbers of private schools in which the quality was as good as in a state school. However, the focus groups discussions failed to throw more light on the phenomenon where medium to high socioeconomic status families chose a state school as their first selection to enrol their children above a private school.

Furthermore, the preference of vocational school that all girls from Armadillo school chose was an interesting issue. A vocational school as described in the Indonesian education context in Chapter 2 section 2.1.1 was intended to teach students to gain certain skills so that, by the end of their schooling, they were supposed to be well prepared to work in the industry. The report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and Asian Development Bank (2015) revealed that boys

dominated admission to the vocational schools in Indonesia. However, the participants from Armadillo school showed contradictory responses as the girls preferred enrolling in state vocational schools while the boys decided the state secondary schools. Unfortunately, the data did not allow investigation of gender parity issues.

The divergence of students' preferences for their next level of schooling among the state, low-, medium- and high-cost private schools in this study was likely to be caused by the types of the school. This situation was particularly apparent in the participants from the low-cost private schools in this study who responded to the question about the school they preferred for their next level of schooling. Sarah, for example, indicated that she wanted to study in a state school; her parents did not pursue her dream. The parents of low-cost private school students might be concerned about the high expenditure that they had to forfeit if they enrolled their children in a state school. They seemed to choose a low-cost private school for their children next school as they might not manage to pay for the state school. Bedi and Garg (2000) pointed out that the motive of parents to decide which school their children supposed to enrol in was based on the benefits they had or would have, including the costs of entry and the future benefits. The Savannah focus group's responses were also likely to be aligned with Bangay's (2005) argument which stated the factors that influenced parents in Indonesia to prefer private school to state school were "geography, academic selection and economics" (p.171).

However, this suggested a gap between poor and wealthy families in regards to state school participation rates was likely to emerge. This condition may lead to complexity in carrying out any policy aimed at narrowing the gap in the state-school participation since this tended to depend on the parents' socioeconomic status. The decision to register in a school may relate to household income. It has been well established in the research literature that students coming from low socioeconomic families throughout the world had generally lower academic achievement than their more advantaged peers (Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996; Davis-Kean, 2005).

In some cases, low-cost private schools had been identified as producing the outcome of poor quality (Strauss et al., 2004; Newhouse and Beegle, 2006; Stern and Smith, 2016). In this way, the growth of the students' attainment in the private school would be highly possible to achieve, in line with Hattie's (2003: 3) claimed that the teacher was "the greatest source of variance that can make the difference". The quality teacher was significantly responsive to encourage the students and improve learning

quality in the classroom. Quality teaching in low-cost private schools tended to be low in performance. In most state secondary schools in Indonesia, the teachers are expected to teach one subject, while private schools were likely to recruit more teachers that might be less qualified than those who teach in a state or an elite school (Chang et al. 2014). Some non-civil servant teachers were assigned to a state school but had “a 2nd teaching job in the private school” or worked in other schools (Stern and Smith, 2016: 9). It indicated that the state teachers had more time in managing the classroom than private school teachers.

The belief that the examination was a useful basis for school selection purposes led the group members to be driven to learn. The participants of the focus groups suggested that the national examination had a positive influence on their learning as they were driven to study harder as the national examination approached. It was in line with the findings discovered by Sukyadi and Mardiani (2011). The students from one school who participated in their interview and questionnaire believed that the English national examination was not “a nuisance” since it motivated them to learn harder (p.105). While they gave the impression that the examination motivated them to learn, the analysis indicated that the motivation to which they referred was related only to learning for the examination. The opportunity for them to learn by gaining knowledge and skills was probably not their priority, as their goal was to gain high scores in the examination. Harlen and Deakin (2003: 171) referred to students who were motivated to learn by external assessment as ‘shallow’ learners since their focus was on performance goals, not learning goals.

The findings also suggested that the students’ perceptions that the examination failed to match the purposes of the learning during their junior secondary school years did not reduce the importance in their eyes of the examination. They believed that three years of learning would be of no use if they failed in the examination. Dina also indicated that her well-being and physical condition during the examination would influence her performance and there was a possibility that she could gain low scores if, for example, she was not feeling well on the day of the examination. She found it “unfair” as she believed that the results of the examination did not reflect her learning over three years.

6.3 The influences of the examination on students' learning practices

The participants in the discussions were asked to mention if they noticed any differences they experienced in their learning practices at school, home and cram school.

6.3.1 *At school*

The focus groups were asked to indicate what changes they experienced in the classroom in the second semester of their final year. The members pointed out that they spent more time learning to prepare for the examination in the second semester. Two exam-preparation activities emerged in the analysis: narrowing the curriculum and reviewing past examination papers.

Narrowing the curriculum

The participants from Millennium school showed that there was a tendency for the teachers to narrow the curriculum in the second semester. Their responses indicated that the second semester exclusively covered test-preparation activities. Dina, for example, said, "In the previous semesters, we learned the materials taken from the textbook; as we are now in Year 9, we focus more on preparing the national examination." Dina's response showed that the national examination had a washback effect on learning in school. The participants in the focus group discussions reported that classroom activities were focussed on the subjects to be tested in the national examination. The learning was not based on practising reading, writing, speaking or listening but it emphasized practising test items. It appeared that the purpose of learning in the second semester was to learn to the test. Teaching to develop learning and skills conflicted with teaching for the examination. Dimas confirmed that "The teacher more often discusses the questions (taken from the past exam papers)", while Nina said that her English teacher focussed "more on discussing the preparation of the national examination."

Bayu from the Pleasant Hill focus group also suggested that the content of the curriculum was narrowed to focus on exploring what type of questions would be covered in the examination. He said, "[the English teacher] discussed more on answering questions on the textbook". As the examination was multiple-choice based, Bayu noticed that his teacher focussed more on exam-like questions than on the lesson itself. The participants mentioned that the class in the second semester concentrated

mainly on preparing for the examination. Nurul, for example, said that her materials during the English lesson were mostly intended for “practising for the national examination”.

The analysis of the findings indicated that there was no difference in the learning experienced by the members of focus groups from the four different schools. The focus groups also confirmed that they believed the English teachers modified her teaching material to meet the need of preparing for the examination. Since they had started their second semester in the ninth grade, the teacher had focussed on giving hints for the examination. The participants noticed that the use of textbooks reduced in classroom activities as it was believed that the textbooks did not cover the same material that would be included in the examination. The focus groups showed that the examination had a washback effect on the materials, as those that would not be covered in the examination were eliminated from classroom activities.

Reviewing past examination papers

The four focus groups agreed that classroom discussion mainly focussed on past examination papers. All the participants reported that they spent more time working with exam-related material. The students seemed to have no problem with the emphasis on the past examination papers, as they may have believed that such materials could potentially raise their scores. Bagus from Savannah group, for example, said, “I feel readier [to sit the national examination] if I have past exam papers”. This statement suggested that the students perceived that the objective of the classroom activities was to gain high scores in the examination. The group participants showed that they supported the teachers on the value of discussing past examination papers in the classroom. Their agreement may also indicate that they believed that their scores in the examination were the achievement which they were pursuing. This situation led to an issue. The materials presented in the classroom, especially in the second semester, were mainly aimed at helping the students to gain high scores. In this case, the textbook failed to provide the content for the examination. The original textbook that covered skills to be achieved was not necessarily to be used fully in the classroom as it did not intend to prepare for the examination. Content that would be tested in the examination tended not to be covered in the textbook.

The examination papers of past years were believed to be essential for those preparing for the examination. There was an indication that the textbook presented in the classroom contained neither examination-like practices nor examination materials as Dina from the Millennium said, “We used to study materials from the textbook, but in the final year we focussed more on materials for the examination.” Even though the classroom activities also included reviewing the materials taken from Year 7 and 8, the activities were likely to put less emphasis on the materials that would not be covered in the examination. Heri from Savannah stated that materials taken from seventh, eighth and ninth grades were also discussed, but discussing the past examination papers was believed to help him more in preparing the examination.

Meanwhile, the Armadillo group agreed that the teacher, besides applied the teaching to the test activities in preparing the students to do well; the teachers also alerted them that the examination would soon come. They believed that their English teacher frequently reminded them that they would soon sit the examination. The English teacher of the Pleasant Hill school also had a similar practice as the focus group notice the teacher repeatedly reminded them to study for the examination at home. The Millennium group also claimed that the teacher exhorted them to study harder as their future depended on the scores. Giving more exhortation to the students might be believed as an effective way to have the students aware of the power of the examination. Nabila suggested her English teacher was “more intense in discussing the practice tests of the national examination”. In high-pressure situations, mainly preparing for the examination, the classroom activities were focussed more on achieving high scores than discussing the materials on the textbook.

6.3.2 At home

The focus group discussions indicated that the examination also influenced activities at home. Participants from the Savannah school mentioned that they mostly learned until 9 p.m. to prepare for the examination. They confirmed that their learning time at home was increased due to the examination. In consequence, their other activities were reduced or eliminated. Jasmine, Fauzan, Angga and Nina said that they had “less sleep” during the second semester. Ida, Arif, Heri, Bagus, Nurul and Sarah said that they had less watching time, while Dimas stated that the situation made him “study more, lessen the playing and watching time”.

Through understanding the patterns, the group participants assumed that they would be able more easily to answer the questions in the examination. Amalia, for example, thought that the test items were likely to be the same as in previous examinations. She said that she preferred to study the past examination papers rather than the classwork that she had done since Year 7. Jasmine, from Armadillo, was critical about homework: “It’s better to have the homework related to the examination, but unfortunately it’s not”. Her statement indicated that she preferred spending her learning time at home in examination preparation rather than doing unrelated homework.

Four students from Savannah and one student from Pleasant Hill said that they learned the materials from Year 7 and 8 besides learning the materials of the ninth year. Nina added that examination preparation activities included learning the materials from the previous years and past examination papers at home as well as learning tricks to fill the answer sheet well. She said, “I learn the materials that I have forgotten, and I learn how to blacken [the bubble on the answer sheet]”. The anxieties that the answer sheet might be rejected and that this could lead to her failing the examination made Nina practise how to fill in the bubble answer sheet. She could have believed that it was important to learn how to circle the bubble darkly, as failure to do so could affect her scores in the examination.

6.3.3 At cram school

As another consequence of the examination, ten participants in the focus group discussions mentioned the need to attend a cram school, as they assumed it could help them boost their confidence in sitting the examination. Karina, a Savannah student, for example, believed that a cram school offered a preparation programme that focussed more “on the exam materials and doing exam-like questions.” However, none of the participants from the Savannah school mentioned that they attended a cram school. As the students were from low socioeconomic status families, attending a cram school may have been beyond their means.

Dinda, from the state school, was concerned at having less ability for grasping what was taught at school. She noted the importance of attending a cram school since she believed that the school helped her to understand the contents of the examination more easily. According to Dinda, a cram school provided her with an examination

preparation book so she could discuss it with her friends. Also, Jasmine said her reason for attending a cram school was, “So I can have more preparation for the examination”. As Nabila intended to seek admission in a state senior secondary school, she also considered the necessity of attending a cram school. Studying at a medium-cost private school appeared to lead her to have little confidence that she would achieve high scores in the examination without going to a cram school.

Interestingly, only one member of the Millennium school (Intan) mentioned the necessity of attending a cram school. The other members who were from the high-cost private school seemed to disagree with Intan’s response. Dina, for example, said, “Since I study at school until four [p.m.], I think it’s more than enough.” She believed that the time she spent at school preparing for the examination had helped her to be well prepared.

Discussion of (6.3) Influence of the examination on learning practices

The findings suggested that the focus groups experienced modification of their learning practices in response to the examination. At school, the learning was mainly focussed on preparing for the examination. They reported that they used past examination papers as learning materials. They mentioned that the time they spent learning at home was increased, as they had to do their homework and prepare for the examination. The analysis also identified the learning activities that some students did at a cram school to help them have better preparation for the examination.

The learning that the participating students did at school, home and cram school indicated that their activities focussed sharply on the examination. The goal of learning, especially in the second semester, appeared not to be to gain knowledge but to gain high scores in the examination. The activities that they undertook, like reviewing past examination papers or working with an exam preparation book, were evidence that they considered learning for the test was necessary. The statements from the participating students who attended a cram school suggested that a shadow education focussing on test-preparation activities was one of the washback effects of the national examination on students’ learning practices.

The participants from four focus groups noticed that their English teachers modified the methods of her teaching in the second semester. There was potential evidence that the national examination drove the English teacher to use certain methods

to engage students with the examination. During the semester leading to the final examination, teaching materials were mostly taken from past examination papers or practice test books. Some participants stated that their English teachers focussed on giving examination-like questions in the classroom. The participants' responses showed that the teachers made modifications to their teaching methods to reflect the national examination's demands. As the national examination consisted of multiple-choice items, the teachers were likely to be under high pressure to practise such items in the classroom. This description was well pictured by Shepard (1991: 233) who said "giving students extensive practice on the kinds of questions that appear on the test in precisely the same format as is found on the test".

Surface learning which was based on memorisation and recall, as the students in this study implied, could improve the students' scores in the national examination. However, this type of learning failed "to develop higher-level thinking skills" (Morgan, 2016). It might be in line with Madaus and Russell's (2010) claim that "attainment no longer focuses primarily on skills and knowledge". The national examination was considered as central to learning activities. The findings suggested that the administration of this examination failed to support the students' learning. Severe consequences attached to the national examination led the students to believe that their goal of learning was to gain a high score. This belief then influenced their learning at school, home and beyond. The use of the national examination as the entrance ticket for the next level of schooling could misclassify the students. High scores gained in the national examination need not mean higher students' performance in the classroom.

As the stakes for the national examination were high, the teachers and students tended to feel pressured to raise scores. The participants agreed that the curriculum was narrowed in the second semester as the impact of the national examination. The focus groups also indicated that the class time was devoted to the test preparation activities. The changes made in the second semester suggested that the classroom activities were adapted to meet the need of the national examination. As the participants believed that the English examination was not only taken from the content of the second semester, reviewing the contents of the previous academic years was also required. However, as it would take more time, test preparation activities which emphasised more the content be included in the national examination were considerably more efficient in preparing the students.

The participants of the focus group discussions stated that their teachers mainly focussed on reviewing past examination papers or providing practice tests as the strategies most likely to help the students sit the national examination. The use of the national examination as the entrance requirement to future schooling could have a direct impact on the learning as the students learned to the test. The exhortation that the teachers provided in the classroom suggested that their practices relied on gaining high scores in the national examination. The stakes of the national examination were, therefore, not only intended for the students but also the teachers. The teachers could consider that their accountability was at stake. The failure of the students in gaining high scores as expected in the national examination could be attributed to the teachers' failure in teaching the final year students.

Emphasising teaching some parts while abandoning the other parts of the textbook showed that the teachers neglected the content of the curriculum and preferred helping the students to improve their performance in the national examination. Even though Bayu admitted that his teacher still used the textbook, its use was intended to focus on the preparation.

The students were forced to face the reality that they tend to focus on materials that were related to the testing rather than the activity of language learning (Wiseman, 1961: 21). Having limited English vocabularies was also concerned by teachers who participated in an exploratory study conducted by Furaidah et al. (2015) in Malang, Indonesia. During their observations, the teachers tended to translate directly into Indonesian the English words that their students did not know.

As the national examination was designed as multiple-choice items, it may narrow the learning in order to achieve high scores in the national examination without being able to employ critical thinking. Teachers were supposed to "interact with students in these environments in purposeful and intentional ways to help students acquire explicit knowledge and skills" (Guskey, 2013: 3). Acquiring the knowledge and life-skills and applying in real life may not be of interest as a learning goal anymore.

Shohamy (1992: 514) stated that "creating change through testing is, in fact, an effective device because schools will usually strive to meet external standards and will change teaching methods to improve performance on tests". The national examination brought increased pressure on the teachers whose subjects were being tested in the

national examination. Some participants believed that their English teachers focussed more their teaching activities on the examination cycle.

Dina's and Intan's understanding (Millennium Junior Secondary School) that the pattern of the questions in the national examination would likely to be similar to that of the previous examination is significant, and it is crucial to consider and to raise questions about how the students perceived the importance of their learning in the seventh and the eighth grades. This finding was also suggested by a study conducted by Tirtaningrum and Ngadiman (2015). The results of their study involving 121 junior secondary school students from Surabaya, Indonesia showed that the participating students preferred "to practice all kinds of tests instruction and made the state of learning as their tactics to encounter the tests" (Tirtaningrum and Ngadiman, 2015: 50).

The responses taken from four focus groups indicated that there was shifted focus between the first and second semesters. While the first semester discussed the textbook based on the curriculum, the second semester focussed more on the test-preparation activities. Neglecting the textbook in the second semester showed that the focus of classroom activities was no longer to administer the designed curriculum but to gain certain scores in the national examination. It also showed that the focus of classroom activities in the second semester was to teach material based on the national examination, not that based on the curriculum.

The time spent on the test-preparation practices narrowed the focus of the curriculum to cover what would be included in the national examination. Such practices, though were believed to raise scores, also showed the intended purpose of activity of the final year in the classroom. Bailey (1999) indicated that a high-stakes test, such as the national examination would directly affect the students' learning or non-learning activities. Learning, watching, playing and sleeping were themes that emerged in the data telling the activities affected by the national examination. The students noted that they allocated a considerable amount for practising exam-like questions during their self-study at home. One participant said he studied for the national examination in the afternoon after he got back from school. Meanwhile, eleven indicated that their evening times were spent in preparing for the national examination.

Corry (2017: 215) in her study suggested that there was a difference between boys and girls in viewing the importance of self-learning where "girls took more responsibility for their own learning". One participant in her interviews believed that

when school ended, a girl would go home and study while a boy would go out play football. However, the focus group discussions in this study showed no difference between how the boys and girls spent their time outside of school. Both boys and girls in this study stated that they allocated more time in their homes to prepare for the national examination. One boy from the Savannah school even clearly stated that he studied for the national examination in the afternoon right after he came back from school.

How the parents had become involved in school-related activities was probably associated with students' outcomes and parents' educational background. The findings emerging from the analysis of focus group responses showed that the parents' understanding of the purposes of the national examination had an impact on their children. There was increased tension for students as parents consistently emphasised the importance of the national examination and put pressure on their children to elicit their best performance in the national examination. How the parents supported their children's learning activities varied due to parents' different conceptions of their role in supporting their children. Some state school and elite private school students who participated in the focus group discussion identified that their parents placed high expectations on their children to promote better futures for their children. Most participants indicated that their parents reminded them to study for the national examination, but there was no indication that the parents pressurised their children to gain high scores. Some students noticed that their parents tried to minimise their children's anxiety about the national examination by showing that they did not pressure their children much about the importance of the national examination.

Nina's experience (Armadillo Junior Secondary School) and that of Amalia (Millennium Junior Secondary School) however indicated that their parents involved more in monitoring their children's progress. The national examination that was attached to its high-stake might drive Nina's mother to do such behaviour. Their parents seemed to define successful learning by gaining a high score in the national examination. A recurring topic in much of the literature showed that better-educated parents tended to provide more support for their children's education (Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996; Bogenschneider, 1997) that led the children to have the higher achievement (Delaney et al., 2011; Haines & Mueller, 2012).

Asian Development Bank and Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development (2015) argued that the implementation of the 2015 national examination

system within schools in Indonesia was intended to develop the students' critical thinking and creativity but failed to provide the teachers with the means to adapt its application to their practices. They would prefer teaching with the methods that they believed were best to help them have better preparation for the examination.

The need to do well on the examination then encouraged the students to believe in the necessity of attending a cram school. Such schools had an intensive preparation programme of practice examination, especially focussed sessions in the months leading up to the national examination week. Bray (2006) indicated that attending the tutoring could not only help the students to gain achievement at specific levels of education but also to gain admission to high-status institutions. Private supplementary tutoring, including cram schools, has grown in Asian countries, including Indonesia. This belief could also have led ten students in the focus groups to state the necessity of attending a cram school. While two of them only spoke of their need for a cram school, eight of them indeed spent their time outside of school and home at a cram school. The trend of cramming school indicated that attending such school could help the test-takers gain higher scores in the examination. The existence of this after school activity was even considered by some scholars in Japan as a must since without its support, "the educational objectives of Japanese society cannot be attained" (Harnisch, 1994: 323). It also reflected on the statement given by eight students in these focus groups. They believed the learning they had at school and home was inadequate to help them be well prepared for the national examination.

Summary of Chapter 6

The focus group discussions were intended to create a safe environment where the participants could be at ease to express their views. However, a number of students seemed not to be comfortable in answering the questions from a stranger, although the focus group discussions were conducted within the school area. They remained silent throughout the discussions. This chapter indicated that the data gathered were not as rich as the data gained from the teachers' interviews. However, some interesting issues emerged in the analysis.

The analysis of the students' focus group discussion showed that the participants experienced a high level of anxiety in the second semester. Two reasons identified in the analysis was fear caused by the national examination and tiredness as a result of homework and preparing for the examination. Although three students showed they had

mixed feelings (partly negative and partly positive reaction) about the examination, the other participants showed that they experienced more pressure studying in the second semester.

The pressure that the teachers and parents felt had also been transferred to the students. This condition suggested increasing the level of anxiety and stress for them. The pressure led the participating students to learn for the test. Being a final year student could then be more challenging in the second semester. The findings suggested that the examination had a positive impact on the students in two ways. The first way was the use of the examination in determining their future. The participants except the Savannah focus group were very aware that the results of the examination would determine their future in terms of gaining admission to the next level of schooling. They regarded this as a positive impact as it contributed to their motivation to learn. However, Nina's statement that her mother threatened her, and so she had to learn to gain high scores in the examination indicated that sometimes the motivation mostly came from an external factor like parents.

Learning for the examination was not done only at school. It was also reflected in activities at home and cram school. Discussing the past examination papers or practising the exam-like questions had become the students' learning activities both at school and home. Those who believed that the preparation was insufficient ended up attending a cram school to boost their confidence in taking the examination. However, what did not appear in the focus group discussions was evidence that the learning for the test did improve the scores. The motivation for the students to learn in Year 7 and 8 was also not shown in this chapter.

The following chapter will present the findings taken from analysis of the interviews with ten parents. The chapter covers the analysis of the parents' perceptions of the national examination.

Chapter 7 : Results and discussion of parents' interviews in response to the national examination

Overview

Chapter 6 reported the findings taken from four focus group discussions with 28 final year students. The chapter covered the analysis of the findings of the students' feelings and perceptions and their practices in response to the national examination. Pearson (1998: 98) describes washback as likely to occur when "public examinations influence the attitudes, behaviors, and motivation of teachers, learners and parents". In addition to the views of teachers and students, this study also considers the views of parents. Ten parents (listed in Table 7-1 below) were selected purposely as discussed in the Methodology chapter to explore their perspectives on the national examination which their child would soon sit. The interviews with seven parents were conducted in their houses, two parents were interviewed at schools where their child studied and one parent was interviewed in his shop. Some factors used to determine socioeconomic status are the parents' occupation, the location of their house and its condition. A number of the parents' responses during the interview were also used to indicate socioeconomic status.

Name	Gender	Profession	Socioeconomic status	Type of school
Ahmad	Male	Shop retailer	High	Medium-cost private
Dara	Female	Housewife	Medium	State
Imam	Male	School vice principal	Medium	Medium-cost private
Lia	Female	Housewife	Medium	State
Nisa	Female	Housewife	Medium	State
Rizki	Male	School staff	Medium	Medium-cost private
Siti	Female	Stay-at-home mom	Low	Low-cost private
Tari	Female	Tailor	Medium	Medium-cost private
Wati	Female	Grocery seller	Medium	Medium-cost private
Yani	Female	Online-shop seller	High	High-cost private

Table 7-1_Profiles of participating parents

Parents' comments were analysed thematically to draw attention to the different ways that national examination may affect how they treated their children. The research questions of this study were also used as a basis to analyse the 31 pages of interview transcripts. The first theme presented the parents' response to the question "how do you feel knowing that your child will soon sit the examination?" Some labels on the transcripts like "fear" then went into this theme. The parents' beliefs on the purposes of the examination were included in the second theme: parents' views on the national

examination. The second theme also described how some of the parents had a positive attitude and some of them criticised the purpose of the examination. The influence of the national examination on parenting practices was the last theme of this chapter. A number of responses that described the possibility of their parenting being influenced by the national examination were discussed in this last theme. The themes, sub-themes and sub-sub-themes are described in Table 7-2 below.

Themes	Sub-themes	Sub-sub-themes
7.1 Parents' feelings about the national examination	7.1.1 Neutral feelings	No negative impact
		Peaceful
	7.1.2 High levels of anxiety	Fear of failing in the examination
		Fear of failing in gaining admission to a state school
7.2 Parents' views on the national examination	7.2.1 It is fit for purpose	Shame of a child failing in the examination
		It determines the child's future
		It motivates the child to learn
	7.2.2 It is not fair	It measures the child's competence
		The abilities of children are varied
7.3 The influence of the national examination on parenting practices	7.2.3 It needs improvement	Having a low-stakes test
	7.3.1 Parenting styles	Authoritarian
		Authoritative
	7.3.2 Parental actions intended to enhance opportunities	Sending the child to a cram school

Table 7-2_Themes, sub-themes and sub-sub-themes which emerged in the analysis of parents' interviews

These three major themes and their sub-themes are discussed in the following three sections. Each theme concludes with key findings from the analysis. A summary is presented at the end of the chapter.

7.1 Parents' feelings about the national examination

During the interviews, all ten parents who participated in the study were asked to state their feelings about the national examination. This theme explores the parents' responses categorized in two sub-themes: neutral feelings and high levels of anxiety.

7.1.1 Neutral feelings

This sub-theme presents the analysis of the interviews as they relate to the neutral feelings that two of the participating parents experienced. These two parents' responses as they emerged in the analysis could be described as 'no negative impact' and 'peaceful' and are discussed in the following two sub-sections.

No negative impact

Ahmad, whose occupation was a shop retailer of shoes and bags, indicated that the national examination did not place him under any pressure,

"I don't feel anxious. I feel relaxed since it's been done. The important thing there was no cheating or any other foxy tricks during the national examination. So when a child gets low scores, it might come from the curriculum or the parents who cause the child to get low scores in the national examination" (Ahmad, individual interview, p.2).

His statement above indicated that the neutral feelings intimated by Ahmad arose for two reasons. First, as the interview was conducted after the national examination, he showed that he felt relaxed. It was possible that if he had been interviewed before or during the national examination he could have felt high levels of anxiety. The second reason that he felt relaxed arose from the belief that the national examination his daughter had sat had been conducted with integrity. He suggested that the national examination assessed his child validly. His statement below could indicate another reason why Ahmad showed neutral feelings in the interview.

"I plan to enrol her in a state Islamic school. If she's not accepted, I might enrol her in the private Islamic school, since it has quite a lot (of) religious subjects" (Ahmad, individual interview, p.1).

While the parents in this study generally preferred their child to gain admission to a state school rather than to a religious-based school (see section 7.1.2), Ahmad showed the opposite. The Islamic school that offered more religious subjects than any other schools led him to choose it above the state school. He also suggested that getting admission to an Islamic school would be easier, as most parents preferred registering their child in a state school.

Peaceful

This state of feeling was indicated by Siti, a widow with six children.

“I feel usual. I don’t worry about it. I just pray. If she has a good fate, it will return to be good, but if it’s not, we need to keep trying, praying and studying. I wake up at night to do the prayer; once I prayed, I would feel more relaxed. Because the one who determines the decision is God” (Siti, individual interview, p.3).

While Ahmad stated that his neutral feeling was due to the fact that the national examination which his child had sat had been conducted with integrity, Siti provided a different reason why she felt peaceful about the national examination. Her peaceful feeling was caused by her belief that God would decide the fate of her daughter. She indicated that being anxious could not affect the future of her child, since in every difficulty that her daughter might face God would be prepared to give her relief. She believed that if she kept praying, she would not have high levels of anxiety, since God would bring happiness to her life.

Siti also suggested that her feelings of peacefulness came from her decision to enrol her child in a low-cost school.

“I think I will enrol her in in SKB¹⁰. I don’t have much money to pay for the tuition fee and other payments. The school is a free school; there is no such tuition. I just need to pay for the examination” (Siti, individual interview, p.1)

Her statement showed her decision to register her child in a non-formal school because it was accessible to people who had a low socioeconomic status like herself. She believed that her daughter could have continual education in SKB and that the school would not charge her except for the national examination. The neutral feelings that she expressed in the interview could possibly come from her planning to enrol her child to a school less favoured by other parents.

7.1.2 High levels of anxiety

This sub-theme was identified from the parents’ responses that indicated that they experienced greater pressure with regard to the national examination. Three specific concerns reflected in the data were fear of failing in the national examination, fear of failing in gaining admission to a state school and the shame of a failing child.

¹⁰ SKB is non-formal education supplied by the local government to provide an alternative education or additional learning beyond formal school (Indonesian Ministry of Education, 2003).

Fear of failing in the national examination

Two parents demonstrated their high levels of anxiety about the national examination. They were afraid that their child would fail to perform well.

“I’m nervous. I’m afraid he couldn’t graduate. I’m the one who is afraid he might not graduate. Since I heard there might be a student who can’t graduate. I’m the one who is the most stressful” (Wati, individual interview, p.2).

Thinking that her son could obtain low results in the national examination led Wati to have a feeling of unease. The information which she had gained that there was a possibility that the students could fail in the national examination and lead to them not graduating from their current school terrified Wati. She believed that among her family members, including her son, who would soon sit the national examination, she was the family member who had the highest level of anxiety. Her high levels of anxiety could relate to her decision to register her child in a state school.

“I would love to enrol him in a state school if he is smart. But it depends on the scores he will gain in the national examination. He also wants to register in a state senior secondary school” (Wati, individual interview, p.2).

Dara; a housewife with two children, also showed her fear of her son’s failing in the national examination. She said, “I am afraid he couldn’t do the national examination well. I want him to pass the national examination”. Her fear of failure appeared to be caused by the possibility that her son could gain low scores in the national examination. Gaining low scores in the national examination was a situation that she wanted to avoid, as she had decided to enrol her son in a state school. She stated, “I think I will enrol him in a state vocational school”.

Fear of failing to gain admission to a state school

The purpose of the national examination to support a selection decision for entry to senior secondary school appeared to contribute to high levels of anxiety among five parents in the study. They expressed their fear while waiting for the result of the national examination. The fear appeared to be caused by their perceptions that the scores gained in the national examination would determine admission to the next level of schooling. The words ‘afraid’ and ‘nervous’ were the terms the parents used to show their high levels of anxiety.

Yani shared her concern, “I’m nervous since the scores of the national examination will determine to which school my daughter can enrol.” She intended to enrol her daughter in the only state vocational school that had an animation major, as her daughter wished to be near to her house. She realised it would not be as easy as gaining admission to other state schools, as her daughter had to compete with more applicants. She said, “...those who are not from the council where the school is located are demanded to have higher scores to enrol in a state school in that council”. She had high expectation that her daughter could not gain the high scores which were expected and it led her to have high levels of anxiety.

Imam echoed Yani’s fear of failing in gaining admission to a state school. He said, “I feel anxious, I’m afraid her scores will be low”. He was afraid that if his daughter gained lower scores, even though these reached the minimum requirement of the school, she would have to compete with other applicants who gained minimum scores as well. He shared his anxiety, “My wife and I are expecting the results of the national examination.” Imam believed that the opportunity for his daughter to be admitted to a state school would be greater if she gained higher scores in the national examination. Imam, a vice principal at the same school where his daughter studied, expected his child to gain admission to a state school in another district. He said, “If the scores are high, I might enrol her in a state school outside this area.” The state school to which Imam planned to gain admission was a prestigious school, so he showed his fear that his daughter might not be able to reach the minimum scores in the national examination that the school required.

Tari also shared her anxiety waiting for the results of the national examination, “I’m afraid his scores in the national examination will not be sufficient for enrolling him in the school”. Although competition to be admitted to the school was not as high as for Yani’s daughter’s next school, Tari believed that she had a very limited choice of state vocational school nearest to her home. “He wants to enrol in a state vocational school. There is no second choice.” Her high levels of anxiety would likely be lower if she knew the scores were as high as she expected. She said, “I feel nervous as he doesn’t have any choice for his senior secondary school”. She showed her reluctance to enrol her son in a state school as she said, “If he studies in the senior secondary school, the fee is quite a lot”. The belief that the tuition fee in a state school was higher than the fee in a vocational state school led to Tari’s persistence that there was no other school to

which she wished her son to be admitted than the vocational state school. She stated, “I’m afraid about where he will continue his study if he is not accepted in that school.”

Similarly, Nisa stated that the high levels of anxiety she felt were due to her belief that the scores in the national examination determined her son’s academic future. She said, “I’m afraid the scores will not be sufficient to enrol in a state school.” However, unlike Tari, who said she had no other choice than to enrol her son to a state vocational school, Nisa mentioned that she did have another choice. She said she would have gone to the second option if her son could not be admitted to his first choice of state school: “Maybe if the scores are not what we’ve expected, we will enrol him in a state school in a neighbouring district.” She did not show concern about having her son study at a school farther from her home as long as he was admitted to a state school.

Being aware that the tuition fee for a private school was likely to be higher than the fee charged by a state school, Lia also showed her anxiety: “I wish I wouldn’t have to enrol her in a private school, since it’s quite hard having our kid studying at a private school. I’m so nervous waiting for the results”. Lia believed that the likelihood of being admitted to a private school was greater than that of gaining admission to a state school. However, she did not want to pay a tuition fee bigger than that required for enrolment of her daughter in a state school.

Shame of a child failing in the national examination

The analysis of the transcripts identified a feeling of shame that related to the serious consequences that a person could suffer following failure to meet a standard that is, in this case, having a child who gained high scores in the national examination. One participant (Rizki) showed this high level of anxiety.

“As I work as the administration staff in that school, if my own daughter gets bad scores in the national examination, it will truly influence me. So the anxiety indeed exists” (Rizki, individual interview, p.3).

Rizki suggested that the anxiety he had come from the fact that he worked at a school where his daughter studied. The high levels of anxiety that he felt were influenced by his belief that his daughter had to perform better in the national examination. Failure to do so would lead to the students and staff having a lower level of confidence in Rizki. The pressure was higher because the school staff where he worked was connected to his family. He said, “The founder of the institution was my own father and now it’s managed by my own nephews and nieces”. He suggested that his anxiety and feelings of

shame resulted from his fear of being disgraced by the society at the school and its influence on the family who run it. Rizki's statement above suggested that the shame of failing did not reflect high levels of anxiety as a parent but as a member of staff in a school.

Discussion of (7.1) Parents' feelings about the national examination

This section presents a number of key findings that the analysis of the data offered. The data taken from the interviews suggested there was a link between the feelings which the parents expressed and the choice of school they preferred for their child's next level of schooling. The neutral feelings that Ahmad and Siti showed appeared to be caused by their decisions about their child's school. The findings suggested that levels of anxiety that Ahmad and Siti had did not relate to their socioeconomic status. Ahmad, whose socioeconomic status was higher than that of Siti, a widow with low socioeconomic status, shared similar feelings to hers.

On the other hand, two parents showed their fear of failing in the national examination and five others indicated their fear of their child failing to gain admission to a state school. While the parents showed two different types of high anxiety, they appeared to relate their feelings to the fact that the results of the national examination determined their child's next school. In the interviews, six parents indicated high levels of anxiety and stated their expectation of their child gaining admission to a state school. Though their preferences of state school were different, they showed similar high levels of anxiety waiting for the results of the national examination.

Four parents who preferred registering their children in a vocational secondary school expected that their children could have job more quickly than if they studied at a senior secondary school. In their third year of vocational school, the student would have to go to an industrial company as an intern for three months. The company selected was usually one which had a connection with the vocational school and which had a proper job for the student based on his major area of study. By having work experience during the vocational education, the student might have more preparation and the company he selected might recruit him as soon as he graduated from the school. The expectation of the participating parents in this study that studying at vocational school could have more benefits appeared to be contradicted by Chen's (2009) study. Chen (2009) investigated the differentiated outcomes of vocational and general secondary academic education, particularly in terms of employment opportunities, labour market earnings, and access

to tertiary education in Indonesia. His findings suggested that studying at a vocational school had no higher benefits in the labour market than studying at a regular school.

The vocational school is not designed to prepare its students to continue to a higher education level. However, there was no significant indication that employers would prefer the graduates of a vocational school to work in their company rather than the graduates from a regular school. Newhouse and Suryadarma (2009) in their study also concluded that there was no proof that graduates from a vocational school had better opportunity to gain employment or earn bigger wages than senior secondary school graduates. Though the vocational school was intended to provide certain skills for its students, the level of opportunity in the labour market was likely to be similar for both vocational and regular schools. However, one benefit could be gained by the vocational graduates. The vocational school provided its students with certain skills which could help them to be an entrepreneur after graduation. Vocational schools taught lessons to help the students to create their own enterprise (Department of National Education, 2007:50).

In a study to investigate the relationship between students' socioeconomic status and their educational outcomes, Perry and McConney (2010) indicated that the schools whose students mostly came from high socioeconomic status had a tendency to gain higher average scores on a standardised test. The middle to high socioeconomic parents who prioritised their children's attainment would then prefer to enrol their children in a state school rather than in a private school. However, these findings were not relevant in the case of the preference of Ahmad, who had high socioeconomic status. There was a possibility that Ahmad not think of his child's attainment as the priority in choosing the school.

The findings suggested that eight parents in this study experienced high levels of anxiety in response to the examination. They suggested that the fear of failing in the examination and of failing in gaining admission that seven out of ten participating parents showed in the interviews was related to their perceptions that results of the examination determined their child's next schooling choice. They expected their child to gain admission to a state school. Additionally, parents' preference for the type of school in which their children should be entered suggested that the national examination influenced the students' future career. Bedi and Garg (2000: 471) noticed that there were some elements to be determined by the parents with regard to their children's next

school, such as “the future earnings stream, and the costs”. The interviews with the parents showed that their priority during the final year at school was to help their children be more aware that the national examination was more important than the learning processes. Some cases in Indonesia showed that the fees charged by state schools “forced poor people to send their children to lower quality private schools” (Rosser & Joshi, 2013: 180). This study indicated that Islamic senior secondary education under the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs was less favoured than senior secondary level provided by the Indonesian Ministry of Education.

Meanwhile, Rizki who worked at a school where his child studied showed his feeling of shame if his child failed in the national examination. He believed that his daughter’s scores in the national examination would decrease the trust of society in the school’s reputation. As a member of a family and of a group of school staff, he indicated that it was his responsibility to make sure the school maintained a good reputation in society. Another example of a collectivist attitude seemed to appear in the analysis of Rizki’s interview. The analysis of his data showed that his feeling of shame if his child failed in the examination was not related to his role as a parent but as an employee who worked at the school where his child studied. It indicated that his awareness that he belonged to a school group led him to show a feeling of shame. Rizki’s feeling was likely to be an example of what Matsumoto (2009) describes as a collectivist attitude. He said that as a member of groups, collectivists “give priority to group goals, behave mostly according to group norms, and do not leave their groups even when they are dissatisfied with them” (Matsumoto, 2009: 118). The fact that he was concerned more for his school’s reputation than for himself as an individual could be an indicator that he took a collectivist view. . However, the data from Imam, who worked in a same school as his daughter studied, did not show a feeling of shame. His position as a member of the school staff did not create a feeling of shame like that described by Rizki.

7.2 Parents’ views about the examination

During the interview, the parents were asked about their opinions on the examination. Three sub-themes emerged in the analysis of parents’ transcripts: (7.2.1) It is fit for purpose, (7.2.2) It is not fair and (7.2.3) It needs improvement. The following three sections discuss the three sub-themes consecutively.

7.2.1 It is fit for purpose

This sub-theme covered the ten parents' responses that the national examination was beneficial for their child. Three main perceptions which emerged in the analysis were: It determined the child's future; It motivated the child to learn; and It evaluated the child's learning.

It determines the child's future

At the end of their final year, students at junior secondary school were required to take the national examination administered by the Ministry of Education and Culture to seek admission to senior secondary school. Using multiple-choice items, the national examination for junior secondary school students includes four subjects: mathematics, English, Indonesian and natural sciences. The scores gained in this high-stakes testing were used to select students to be admitted to the next level of schooling. The national examination could influence the children's future as perceived by four participants in the parents' interviews. Siti stated the importance of the national examination for her child: "If my child has no certificate of the national examination, what her future will be?" Siti believed that her daughter's academic and career future relied mostly on the national examination. Siti's responses showed she treated the examination as playing a prominent role for future career. Having a graduation certificate was one of the targets for Siti as she sent her child to school. This belief suggested that the parents' objective for schooling their children was more related to employment issues than, for example, to gain certain skills as the result of learning a language. Gaining the certificate at the end of the academic year as proof that her child had sat the examination was indeed important in her perspective.

Tari provided similar responses when she was asked about the importance of the national examination. She explained that there were benefits her son could gain by sitting the examination. She said, "[The national examination] is to enable him to continue his study." In her view, the future of her son depended on the results of the examination. She believed that her son could not be admitted to the next level of schooling if he did not achieve well in the national examination. Yani had an opinion similar to Tari's view, as she said, "The national examination will determine which school my daughter can enrol in." Statements from Tari and Yani indicated their perceptions that the national examination determined the child's academic future. They believed that failure to do well in the national examination could possibly have negative

consequences for their children, as they could not be admitted to the schools as they wished.

Lia suggested that the national examination was a necessity for any person who wished to be a student. She stated, “I think there will always be an examination when we study”. Lia’s view was that having the examination was inevitable.

Dara, on the other hand, indicated the importance of the national examination to provide fairness among students seeking to enrol in a certain school. She said,

“The national examination can encourage the children to get to the school they are dreaming about. If there is no national examination, rich people can be admitted to the most favourite schools more easily. I know there are some rumours saying that it also happens nowadays. But at least, there is still opportunity for the children who are from low-economic families to enrol in the favourite schools, since there are scores of the national examination. If there is no national examination, we might come back to suburb areas; the opportunity to go to public school will be low” (Dara, individual interview, p.2)

The perspective that the national examination was needed to create fairness in the school admission process led Dara to have a positive perspective regarding it. She believed there would be a huge gap in enrolment among the students from families of different socioeconomic status if the national examination was abolished. When Dara said, “If there is no national examination, rich people can be admitted to the most favourite schools more easily”, it indicated that the integrity of gaining admission was contested. In Dara’s perception high socioeconomic status parents could have easier access to a prestigious school, as they could bribe the schools. She believed that the current policy that used the scores gained in the examination for accessing the school could reduce the bribery at schools.

The four parents above showed some positive attitudes towards the national examination. Their responses suggested that the national examination had a positive effect on their child’s future.

It motivates the child to learn

This sub-theme was found not only in the analysis of teachers’ interviews and students’ focus discussions but also in analysing the interviews with the ten parents in the study. It included the parents’ perspectives on how the children could be motivated

positively by the national examination. Four parents agreed that the national examination encouraged their children to study harder.

Siti for example said, “If there is no national examination, the children will be more relaxed, they will not study hard, and they will not have the motivation to study.” She indicated that the examination had a positive impact on the children, as it motivated them to study. She believed that the children would have no interest in studying if there was no national examination. Siti perceived a strong link between the national examination and motivation to learn.

Ahmad shared a similar view. He said, “If the government requires the children to gain certain scores in the national examination, the children might study harder.” Ahmad believed that the examination was administered by the government to motivate the children to learn. He agreed with the government’s intention and understood the positive impact the examination could have on his child’s learning. The desire to have good results presumably led his child to study harder in order to have a better preparation for the examination. Dara also echoed the positive impact of having the examination: “The national examination can encourage the children to get the school they dream about.” Her statement suggested that the examination could motivate the children to learn for it, as they were aware its results had links with the choice of their next school.

While the purpose of the examination to motivate the children to learn seemed to be positive, the situation could be negative. The link between the national examination and motivation to learn suggested that the learning had a serious impact on the results of the examination. Instead of motivating the children to learn to grasp some knowledge, there was an indication that the motivation that the parents implied in their statements only focussed on learning for the examination. The motivation was to gain high scores in the examination, because the scores determined admission to the next level of schooling.

“I’ve asked him to study since long time ago. But he disobeyed me. I was stricter when the national examination would be started because the exam is really important” (Wati, individual interview, p.2).

Wati’s statement suggested that there were differences between learning for understanding the subjects and learning for the examination. She indicated that learning for the national examination was more important than understanding knowledge, as she stated, “I was stricter when the national examination would be started.” She seemed to

ask her child to learn more frequently because she realised that the national examination would soon come.

The parents' responses indicated their belief in a positive washback of the national examination on their child's learning. However, they also showed that the learning they meant in the interviews was not learning for gaining knowledge but learning for the national examination.

It measures competence

The purpose of the national examination to measure the child's learning progress was identified in the transcripts of four parents. They believed that the success of learning in the classroom over three years reflected on how well the children could do in the national examination.

Rizki for example said, "I think it [the national examination] is quite important to measure how far our kids attain the subjects that they gained from their teachers." Rizki's statement showed that the examination fitted its purpose in assessing the children's learning. Similarly, Tari shared her perception that "The national examination is the final determination in every school, from the primary school to the upper secondary school." She considered that it was important for the children to sit the examination at every stage of schooling. Tari echoed that the view that the examination was appropriate for assessing students' attainment. When she was asked how important the examination was, she said, "I think it's important to measure the child's attainment." The evaluation of learning by the examination was presumably effective in assessing the children's learning over three years. Imam clearly expressed its importance by saying, "The national examination is really important to measure the students' achievement within their three years studying". The achievement of the learning in three years could be reflected in how well the children perform in the examination. Dara furthermore stated the importance of administering the examination by saying, "It's the end of absorbing the lessons, to know how the achievement of the students is at the end of the lessons, from the first to the third grades." The assessment system run by the school and the teachers where her son studied was not sufficient to evaluate his learning. Dara indicated that her son required sitting the examination as a final test to reflect the learning during three years.

7.2.2 *It is not fair*

This sub-theme referred to the parents' perceptions that the national examination created bias in relation to their child.

Yani suggested that the national examination was not appropriate for measuring the ability of students. She assumed that every student had different abilities, while the national examination only tested four school subjects (mathematics, Indonesian, English and natural science). She said,

“Children have different interests. A child may have weakness in mathematics, but she might have potential in other subjects. She might find learning language is difficult but in other subjects she might find the subjects pleasant. I don't think the national examination is able to measure the student's competence” (Yani, individual interview, p.5).

Yani challenged the fairness of the national examination to assess students' ability as she believed every child had different talents and preferences. Dara also indicated a similar concern when she was asked whether the national examination was a fair means of assessing a child's competence. She said, “I don't think so, since the abilities of the students are varied.”

Despite the fact that Ahmad had a positive attitude towards the national examination with regard to motivation to learn, he later criticized its negative impact on the child's focus on learning. He complained, “The target of the children is only to pass the national examination, without understanding the lessons.” Ahmad believed that the national examination did not promote learning, as the students tended to focus more on gaining high scores than on digesting knowledge. He then said, “The children might cheat because of the national examination, since it requires the children to gain certain scores.” Ahmad indicated that the competition for having a slot in the next level of schooling could lead the children to focus only on gaining higher results, without being concerned about integrity.

7.2.3 *It needs improvement*

This sub-theme was related to the parents' responses on their expectation to have a better assessment system. The analysis of the transcripts identified two suggestions that two parents offered.

“I think we need to improve the comprehension of the children. I don't want the children to be scared of the national examination, as we used to be.

Therefore the children will be more relaxed, and then the parents will be more relaxed as well” (Dara, individual interview, p.3).

The statement above indicated that Dara saw the national examination as a high-stakes test which created high levels of anxiety among the children. The anxiety that the children experienced was then felt by the parents. Being aware of the tension, Dara suggested an improvement in the assessment system. She appeared to argue for a ‘stress-free’ atmosphere among the children and the parents, as the current system generated insecurity in both.

On the other hand, Ahmad suggested that the results of the national examination were not supposed to be used as the entrance ticket to the next school.

I think there is a better way to test the children for the school’s entrance. It’s better for them to have a school entrance test or interview, since the national examination result might not be achieved honestly. If the children are interviewed directly, the interviewer might know their competence. That’s the real fact and it can’t be manipulated (Ahmad individual interview, p.3).

Ahmad’s statement indicated that he preferred a school entrance test and an interview to be applied to gain admission to a school. He believed that the examination did not reflect a person’s ability because the scores could be gained by cheating.

Discussion of (7.2) Parents’ views about the examination

This section presents the main findings identified in the transcripts in respect of the parents’ views about the national examination. They expressed varied opinions in their responses on the benefits and the harm that the examination created.

The purposes of the national examination were related to school selection, motivation to learn and assessing the child’s learning; these were among the benefits that the parents thought were generated by the examination. The correlation between the results of the examination and the child’s future clearly emerged in the analysis. The findings suggested that the examination played an important role in determining the child’s academic future.

Dara’s statement that indicated there would be a huge gap between students coming from families of low and high socioeconomic status showed that socioeconomic status determined school preference among parents. There was a belief that the students

who attended a state school, which might provide more facilities and resources and offer a supportive learning environment, tended to perform better than those who studied at a low cost private school with neither of these advantages. The government regulation that emphasised a free basic education failed to help low socioeconomic status families to be admitted to a state school, which has better facilities than a low cost private school. Dara's statement suggested that the state schools in Indonesia were likely to fail to provide equal opportunities for children whose parents had low education and whose families lived in poverty. There was also an indication that the state school system created stratification of students according to their socioeconomic backgrounds. This condition could lead to unequal educational opportunities and outcomes and might undermine social cohesion. Greater opportunities for advantaged students to choose their school only meant that low economic-status students "have only limited access to relevant information, lack adequate transportation, or have different levels of motivation or aspiration" (OECD, 2012: 10). That would increase stratification, where disadvantaged schools and their students could not compete with the advantaged schools and students.

Another benefit that the parents expressed regarding the examination was its purpose in motivating the child to learn. The statements from Siti, Ahmad and Dara suggested that the examination was needed as a trigger for their child to learn. However, this motivation to learn seemed to focus mainly on attaining well in the examination. The frequency of the parents asking their child to learn appeared to rise as the examination was getting closer. The third benefit which emerged in the analysis was the value of the examination for assessing the child's learning progress. Four parents suggested that success or failure in learning was reflected in the scores gained in the examination.

While addressing the positive perspective that the national examination was fit for these purposes, three parents also stated their negative perceptions. Yani suggested that a child who had no interest in the four subjects tested in the national examination but had potential in other subjects would be at a disadvantage. Ahmad also criticized its value, as he believed that the goal of learning was then focussed on gaining high scores in the national examination.

Furthermore, Dara indicated that the impact of the examination on determining a child's future created high levels of anxiety among the children. So she hoped for an

improvement of the assessment system that would make the examination a low-stakes test. Meanwhile, as Ahmad did not agree that the examination was a valid means of assessing the child's competence, he suggested not using its results for gaining admission to the next school.

7.3 The influence of the national examination on parenting practices

In the interviews, all ten parents were asked about the approach they took in preparing for the examination. The findings of the data divided their responses into two sub-themes: (7.3.1) Parenting styles and (7.3.2) Sending the child to a cram school¹¹. These two sub-themes are discussed in the following sections.

7.3.1 Parenting styles

Parental beliefs and views about the national examination were likely to lead the participating parents in this study to prefer parenting styles which were best for their child being well prepared for the examination. This sub-theme covered the control that the parents exercised over their child, including authoritarian parenting and authoritative parenting.

Authoritarian parenting

Controlling their child tightly was implied in the parents' preference for their child to follow rules as a sign of respect for authority. The analysis suggested three parents set some rules for their child and had a low tolerance of distractions like sleeping or playing.

“I always ask her to study before going to bed. If I caught her sleeping, I would wake her up and ask her to study. I then would ask her whether she wanted to go to school or to have a husband. If she is smart, who will get the profit if it's not for herself?” (Siti, individual interview, p.2)

Despite the tiredness that her daughter showed by taking a rest in her bedroom, Siti kept asking her to study for the national examination. She believed that her daughter could gain a number of benefits if she did well in the national examination. The statement above also clearly illustrated the threat that Siti issued to her child, “whether she wanted to go to school or to have a husband.” As she believed that the examination influenced her child's future, she gave her daughter a threat to motivate her to learn for

¹¹ Sending a child to a cram school is a common practice in Indonesia as part of exam-preparation activities (Bank Indonesia, 2010).

the examination. She indicated that if her child had no motivation to learn, she would prefer her to have an underage marriage. Being married was likely to be a threat that Siti's child was afraid could become real. In West Java, the province where Siti lived, marriage of girls at a very young age commonly happens and "there was no sense that a young girl had the right to choose whether to marry, when to marry or whom to marry" (Jones, 2001: 74-75). Siti appeared to instruct her child to study and offered a serious consequence if she failed to carry out the instruction.

The use of the results of the examination to decide the school admission also caused Wati to exercise high control over her son. She said: "During the national examination, I took his mobile phone. I just want him to be good. I don't want know what the results will be". Wati saw the mobile phone as a distractor for his son from preparing well for the examination. She assumed that taking the mobile phone would help her son focus more on the preparation. Her decision to take her child's phone suggested that she used to exercise lower control over her son as she let him to use his phone. Meanwhile, Dara suggested that she had a reason for being an authoritarian parent over her son.

"I think having a son is different from having a daughter. Sons seldom express what they want to their parents. So as parents, we need to have such an approach" (Dara, individual interview, p.2).

Dara indicated that her high levels of control over her child resulted from her son's attitude. She suggested that raising a teenage boy was more challenging than taking care of a girl. Later Dara also implied that at this age her son kept changing his mind, so she needed to step on every activity and decision her son had to take. She stated her reason behind her parenting style. She said, "He's still rigid. Maybe today he wants to study in school A, and then later he might change his mind. So as a parent, I guide him".

The focus of Siti's, Wati's and Dara's parenting activities was to make sure that their children could be better prepared for the examination. Siti's and Wati's statements seemed to show that they forbade their child to do activities that could prevent them from preparing well, such as sleeping or using a mobile phone. Their statements showed that Siti and Wati took control of their child's activities before the national examination started, as they wished their children not to be distracted in their preparation.

Authoritative parenting

This type of parenting style referred to behaviour where the parents monitored their children's activities but encouraged independence and individuality, as they allowed their child to do some activities. Five parents indicated that they chose to give their child this parenting style.

“If she's playing her mobile phone, sometimes I'm worried about having kids in this era when the internet is everywhere. But she said she was doing homework. So I let her do it. At least she could refresh her mind to avoid being stressed. The kids these years are hard to control” (Lia, individual interview, p.2).

Lia showed her anxiety about the frequency of her child's use of the mobile phone; but she preferred to give her child access to the mobile phone as she believed that it could help her to study. She also stated that use of the mobile phone could help her child to have entertainment and distract her from concerns. Lia believed that besides having disadvantages, the mobile phone could also be advantageous for her child. When she said, “The kids these years are hard to control”, it indicated that she preferred to be low in control because young people nowadays were different from during the time when she was a teenage girl.

Nisa also suggested that she was an authoritative parent who gave her child autonomy to do his activities but also placed limitations on the activities because of the examination. She said,

“When he was playing, I would text him asking where he was; then I reminded him not to play since the national examination would soon come” (Nisa, individual interview, p.2).

Nisa's statement indicated that she encouraged her child to have independence and monitored to some extent his activities, since she recognised her child's right that she needed to fulfil. She let her child carry out the activity as he liked but provided a firm rule as a standard for him to follow.

Tari applied an authoritative parenting style, since she exercised less control over her son's activities.

“What I'm happy about the school is every day the school hour is started by reciting Quran. Then they pray together. So when he came home, he has already done his prayer. So he can play directly after school” (Tari, individual interview, p.1-2).

She stated that the reason for having confidence in her son was her perception that the school taught moral values for her child to follow. Tari believed that her son's school had provided an appropriate atmosphere in the students' learning environment, so she did not have to intervene in her son's activities. The statement, "So he can play directly after school" suggested that Tari also let her child carry out the activity as he liked.

Rizki also suggested that he exercised limited control and showed high tolerance for his child's activities. He said, "I just asked her to study harder at home, to lessen her playing and watching times." His statement indicated that he allowed his child to play and watch but also instructed her to study at home. It appeared that, besides setting some rules as a result of his child having to sit the national examination, he also provided a supportive environment when he allowed her to play and watch, though the time was more limited than when his child was still in the first semester.

Yani also suggested she was an authoritative mother as she said,

"She likes doing something related to internet, doing some stuff with her computer and she likes drawing... The next thing I did was to print out the past exam papers and asked her to answer the questions. Last night, I asked her to do the 2014 maths national examination" (Yani, individual interview, p.3-4).

The statement above suggested how Yani tolerated her daughter doing the activities of her liking despite the fact that she realised that the examination was getting closer. Interestingly, while six parents in this study showed their involvement in their child's learning by instructing the child to learn without being involved directly to the learning activities, Yani indicated that she got involved in her child's preparation and monitored the preparation activities.

Ahmad, who was a high socioeconomic status father, also appeared to be an authoritative parent. Below is some of the interview transcripts relating to his parenting style:

Interviewer: "Did you have a special approach to preparing your child for the national examination?"

Ahmad: "Since her sister is an English teacher, so I let her sister teach her. I might send her to a cramming school if her sister is not an English teacher."

Interviewer: "Since when did you ask your child to learn for the national examination?"

Ahmad: “Honestly, I don’t know exactly when it was started. I just let her sister guide her” (Ahmad, individual interview, p.3).

His responses indicated two issues in regards to his method of treating his child. First, Ahmad stated that he had another child who was an English teacher. He believed his child’s profession provided him with a benefit, as he could ask her to guide her sister to have better preparation for the examination. Though he found it necessary to send his child to a cram school, he believed that his child who was a teacher could be an alternative to the cram school. When he was asked about the time when his older child started helping her sister, he said, “I don’t know.” His answer suggested that he exercised less control over the preparation that his child was doing for the examination. When Ahmad was interviewed, he had divorced his wife and married another woman and had other children. His children from his first marriage, including the final year student and the English teacher, lived with his ex-wife. This situation appeared to be the reason that he had low control of his children and put the responsibility of the preparation on his child. Ahmad’s situation indicated that there could be an impact on parenting style arising from parental divorce.

7.3.2 Parental actions intended to enhance opportunities

Parents who were driven to raise their children’s scores could make it possible for them to take part in test-oriented activities. One of the activities included sending their children to a cram school. Three parents participating in the study indicated a need for their child to attend a cram school.

“I started it [sending her child to a cram school] since she was in third year of primary school. But she did it more intensively since she started her third year of senior secondary school (Lia, individual interview, p.2).

Lia; a medium level socioeconomic parent, indicated that the supplementary tutoring in the cram school could help her daughter do better in the national examination. Sending her child to a cram school suggested that she thought the exam-preparation activities at her child’s school were insufficient. When her child was starting her third year, she found it all the more necessary for her to take an intensive course at the cram school, since she had to sit the examination. Lia showed that a cram school played an important role on her child’s life, as she had starting sending her to a cram school when she was at a primary school.

Dara, who was also from a medium level socioeconomic family, shared a similar approach to help her son have a better preparation. She said, “I sent him to a cramming school starting from the middle of the first semester”. Dara indicated that a cram school could help her son to gain high scores in the national examination.

“I realized that she had weaknesses in maths, so I offered her to go to a cramming school when she was in the eighth grade. But she refused as she said she is tired since her school finishes in the mid-afternoon. As the ninth grade started, she began to think that she needed to go to a cramming school to improve her math skills. So I asked a mathematics teacher to tutor her” (Yani, individual interview, p.4).

Yani, another medium socioeconomic parent, indicated that she had to improve her child’s weaknesses in mathematics as it was one of the subjects tested in the national examination. However her decision was probably to support her child’s need rather than to gain high scores in the examination. She did not encourage her child to have an intensive course in the other three subjects tested. She appeared to focus on her child’s preference about what and when to learn at a cram school.

Discussion of (7.3) The influence of the examination on parenting practices

The findings suggested that the national examination had affected parenting practices among ten parents participating in this study. Three parents could be described as authoritarian and set rules that their child had to follow. An interesting finding appeared in the analysis of Siti’s interview transcript regarding a threat she gave to her child that she believed could motivate her to study. In order to ask her child to study, she gave two options: to study or to marry. Being married was the consequence that Siti’s child had to experience if she had no motivation to learn. The threat that Siti gave tended to create horror on the part of the child, as she was not motivated to getting married. This present study suggests that the national examination had washback effects not only on teachers and students but also on parents.

The authoritative parents were described as having low control and high tolerance of their child’s activities. The analysis identified that this type of parenting allowed the child to do activities like watching and playing, although some parents limited the time for doing such activities. Davis-Kean (2005) pointed out that the child’s expectation to graduate and continue to a higher level was caused by the stimulation he had at home and how well the interaction between parent and child worked. The findings of the semi-structured interviews with the parents indicated that parents who were involved in

monitoring their children's progress and helping them to prepare for the national examination were more likely to have greater expectation of their children's performance in the national examination. A recurring theme in some studies showed that parental involvement positively influenced educational outcomes (Fehrmann et al., 1987; Fan & Chen, 2001; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). The present investigation suggested that parents made their decisions about involvement in their children's learning by thinking about the outcomes likely to follow their actions. It may also be based on their appraisal of their capabilities in providing sufficient preparation for their children. Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1997) showed that parents with lower expectation of outcomes were likely to provide less support for their children to succeed in school. There was an indication of parental involvement in the national examination shown in parents urging the children to learn for it. The parents considered that it was important for the children to spend more time preparing for the national examination.

The interviews with Lia, Dara and Yani regarding cram schools indicated their support for their child having a better preparation for the examination. For medium socioeconomic status families like them, there was a tendency to accept that sending a child to a cram school would not create a problem, as they could support the child financially. However, their decision to send their child to a cram school suggested they thought there was a lack of exam-preparation activities at the school where their child studied. A cram school that possibly had fewer students in a class than a formal school could also provide the reason that Lia, Dara and Yani believed that their child could have a better preparation for the examination there. Their decisions to send their child to a cram school could represent their position as medium socioeconomic status families who could support their child activities financially. Another factor that influenced their decision was likely to come from the fact that their child was studying at a state school (see table 7-1) and they expected him/her to gain admission to a state school (see section 7.1.2).

Mardapi (2009) conducted a study which involved 800 parents from five provinces in Indonesia to investigate their perceptions of the national examination for primary students. His findings, based on questionnaires, showed that 44.14% participating parents sent their child to a cram school in an effort to help him/her to have better preparation for the examination. The analysis of the interviews with parents in this study seemed to support Mardapi's findings. Three mothers in this study indicated that their children attended a cram school to boost their performance in the

national examination. They appeared to believe that the competition for entrance to high-ranking institutions was fierce, so their children needed to attend a cram school to be well prepared for the national examination. However, Robinson and Harris (2014) indicated that parental involvement, including helping a child doing homework, evidently did not improve and in some cases even lowered the students' achievement. Their research, based on longitudinal surveys of American families from the 1980s to the 2000s, concluded that:

“...there were more instances in which children had higher levels of achievement when their parents were less involved than there were among those whose parents were more involved. Even more counter intuitively, when involvement does seem to matter, the consequences for children's achievement are more often negative than positive”.

Ireson (2004) noted that there was an increasing recognition that tutoring or cram school contributed to school achievement. Liu (2012:46) claimed that a cram school “can have an effect on the grades, schooling opportunities, and the future employment of a student”. Retno (2016) in her blog compared the fees among cramming schools in Bandung. She showed the rate for tuition ranged from 4,000,000 to 6,900,000 rupiahs per year or approximately £240 to £415 (exchange rate 13 February 2017). This might be compared with a monthly minimum salary for an employee in Bandung, decided by the government, of about 2,600,000 rupiahs or around £157 (exchange rate 13 February 2017). The findings of this study suggested that the socioeconomic status of the parents and the types of school where their child studied seemed to influence their decision to send their child to a cram school. Three medium socioeconomic status mothers in this study whose child was studying in a state school and expected to gain admission to a state school sent him/her to a cram school. The parents' description of these cram schools showed that the national examination had a washback effect on the child's learning.

Summary of Chapter 7

This chapter began by presenting the findings of the interviews with ten parents whose children would sit the national examination for junior secondary school level. Three themes were highlighted to categorize the data gathered, explaining how the parents in the study showed their feelings concerning the examination, their views about it and its influence on their parenting practices.

The findings showed that preference for the next school contributed to the neutral feelings of two parents and the high levels of anxiety shown by seven parents in the study. While they mentioned different schools, seven parents preferred to enrol their child to a state school. One other parent, who showed a feeling of shame related to a failing child, suggested that the shame did not come from himself as an individual but from his position as an employee of the school where his child studied. That situation led him to indicate that he would have feelings of shame if his child gained low scores in the national examination.

There was a pattern suggested in this study regarding the parents' feelings about the national examination. School preference seemed to contribute to high levels of anxiety experienced by seven parents. There was a possibility that the parents who expected their child to gain admission to a state school experienced a higher level of anxiety than those who did not have such an expectation. While the parents' school preference was related to the level of anxiety, the analysis of the parents' data regarding their views about the examination did not relate to their profession, gender and socioeconomic status. Their varied opinions about the examination covered their perceptions of the benefits and harm that the national examination could create, especially for their child.

These ten parents, who had different backgrounds, also preferred different parenting practices in response to the national examination. However, the statements from Lia, Dara and Yani indicated that there was a possibility that socioeconomic status influenced parents' decision to send their child to a cram school. The preference for a state school also seemed to influence the parents with medium socioeconomic status to send their child to a cram school. The findings suggested that school choice and socioeconomic status contributed to the parents' decision to send their child to a cram school.

In the following chapter, I will present a number of interesting findings related to the corrupted relationship between learning and assessment theories.

Chapter 8 : Assessment, learning and outcomes: Some reflections

Overview

Baird, Andrich, Hopfenbeck, and Stobart (2017: 317) highlighted that “if assessments are to serve the goals of education, then theories of learning and assessment should be developing more closely with each other”. They presented a model representing idealised relationships between learning and assessment theories (see figure 8-1 below). In their article, they recognised that such idealised relationships between these two central pillars of education remained problematic. They demonstrated that in practice, any attempt to reconcile learning and assessment must address tensions between various theories of learning and different purposes of assessment. Deciding what matters in learning and what and how to assess learning is a far more complex process than the idealised model suggests. The complexities of attempting to bring together learning and assessment in practice can at least in part, explain why Baird et al. (2017) recognise that assessment and learning are currently ‘fields apart’.

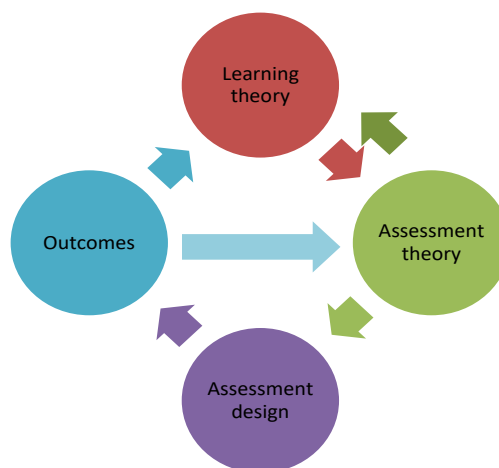


Figure 8-1_Ideal relationships between learning and assessment theories (Baird, 2017: 318)

Education policy in Indonesia has emphasised the importance of serving key Indonesian goals: to develop the students’ learning potential, build critical characteristics and to develop their citizenship as social and economic contributors to society. In the Indonesian context, education refers to:

“a conscious and planned effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have *religious, spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, as well as the skills needed by himself, society and nation*” (emphasis mine, translated from the Indonesian National Education System Act, 2012: 3)

Based on the definition of education proposed by the 2012 Act above, a major aim of instruction at school is to promote learners’ religious convictions, cultural and moral values and practical skills. Recognising at least six religions (Islam, Protestant, Catholic, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism) across the country, some religious values of all religions are expected to be included in the learning process at school based on what religion the students believe. There is a clear implication arising from the definition above: that the focus for student learning in Indonesia is intended to focus on wider purposes than the current knowledge-led curriculum. Central to this definition of what is important in the Indonesian curriculum is the learning process, both how students learn and what students know as they develop the competences described in the curriculum. These changes in the curriculum have to be accompanied by different kinds of assessment carefully designed to meet these different purposes.

The 2006 curriculum, which was being implemented when this study was conducted, reflected the intention for curriculum, instruction and assessment to be integrally connected. This intention as outlined in the 2006 curriculum: to serve the goals of the national education system, a dynamic relationship amongst curriculum, instruction and assessment is thus required (see Figure 8-2).

Baird et al. (2017) argued that if assessment is to serve the goals of education, theories of learning and assessment should be developed more closely. Two decades earlier, Postiglione & Lee (1997: 2) had argued that “schools do not exist in a vacuum’ and ‘are part of the society that surrounds them.” Tensions between different stakeholders and policymakers based on individual perceptions and beliefs, economic interests, religion, social class, and other aspects are inevitable and disruptive. Consistent with the work of Baird et al. (2017), the findings of this study found the relationships between theories of learning and assessment to be ‘fields apart’.

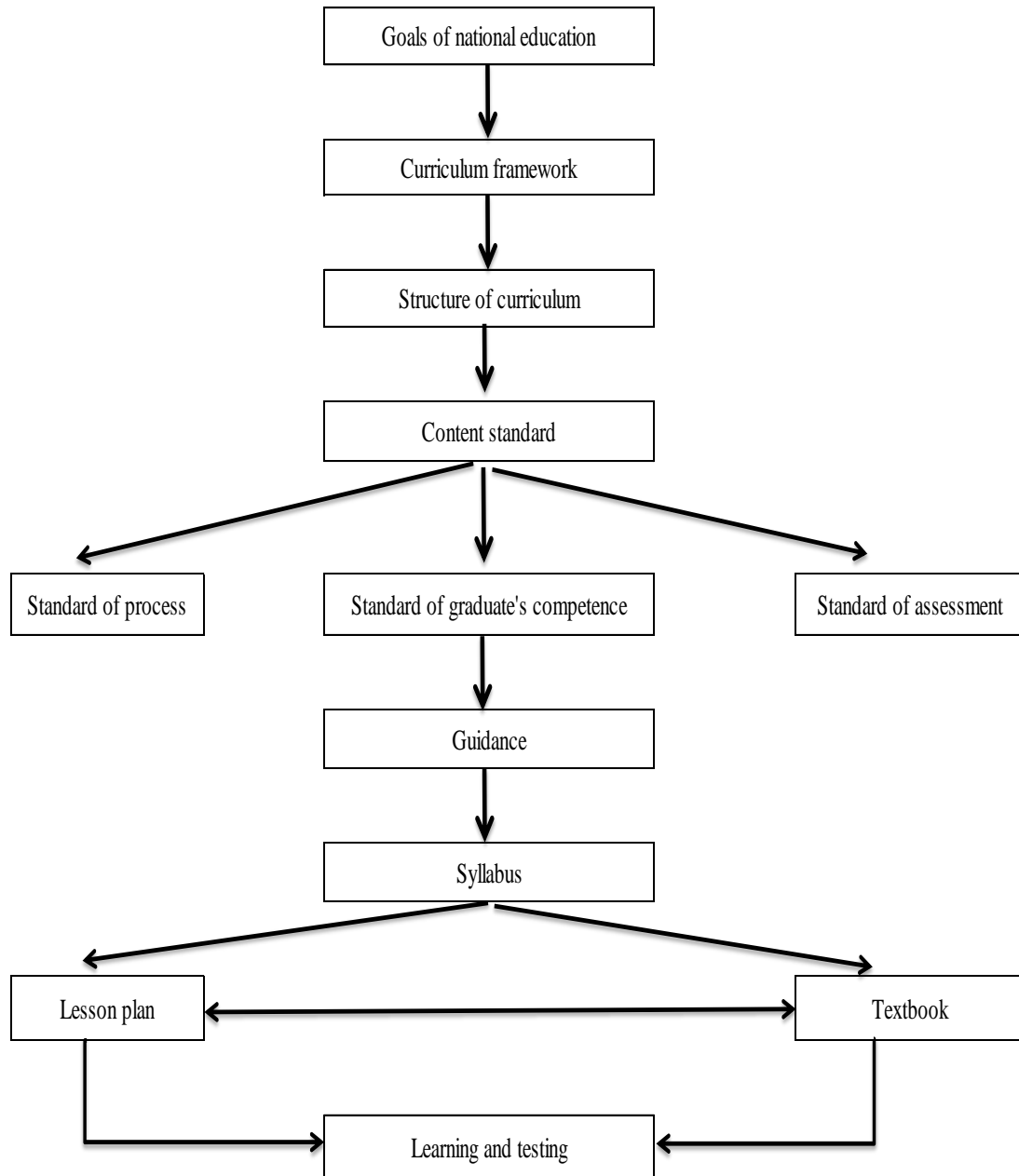


Figure 8-2_Indonesian 2006 curriculum framework (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2013: 31)

The participants of this study - like all human beings - belong to communities of practice. At home, at work or in school, they struggle to work within the rules of their community. In the Indonesian context, gaining high scores in the national examination was seen as a hurdle to be overcome for a young person to be accepted in the community of school, home or work.

The influence on individuals and groups of social context and of distinctive aspects of Indonesian culture is demonstrated in this study. Seven influential factors emerge from the data: greater anxiety, religion, family expectation, corruption, the goal

of learning, gender inequality and collectivism (see Figure 8-3). These seven factors, crucial to understanding the relationship between learning and assessment in Indonesia, were not part of the model proposed by Baird et al. (2017).

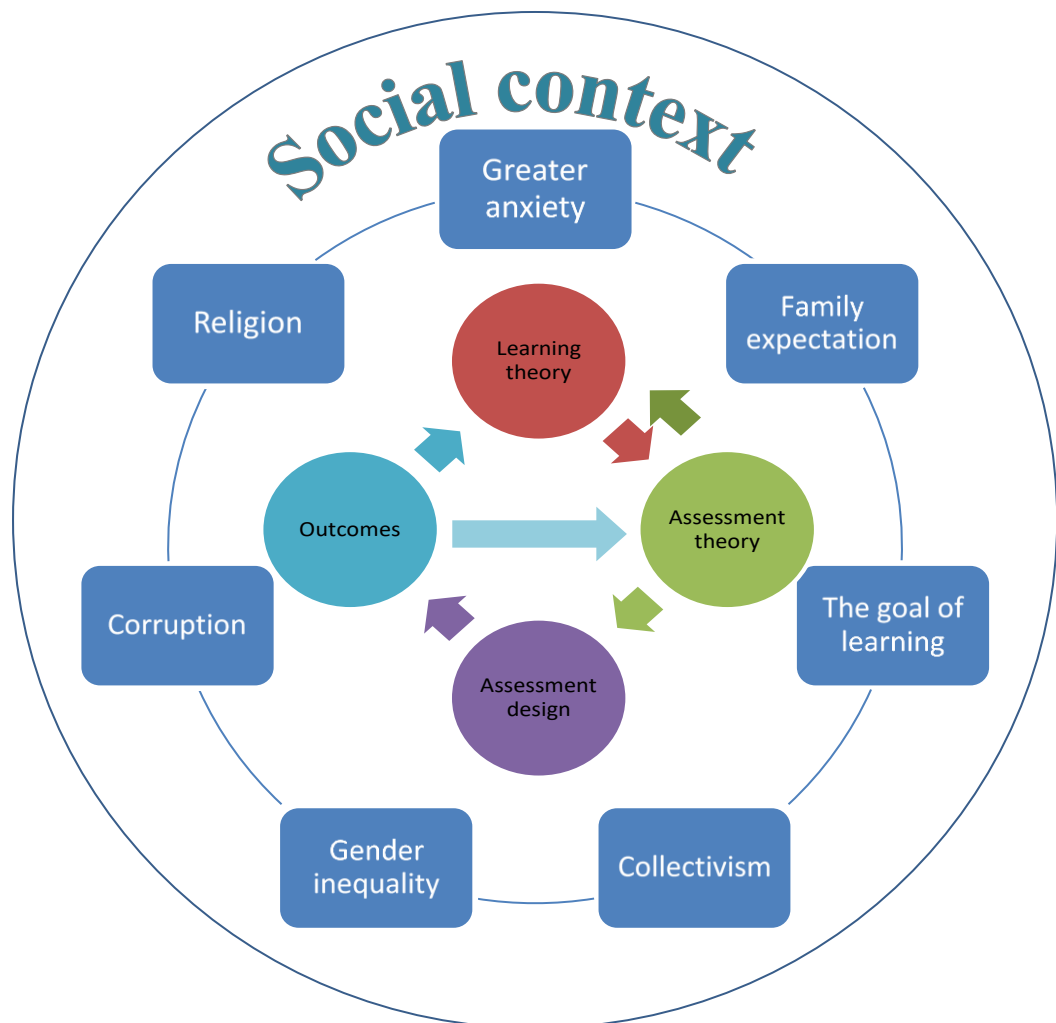


Figure 8-3_Seven factors of social context embedded the relationships between theories of learning and assessment

In terms of family expectation, the teachers perceived that the parents used the scores of the national examination to rate school performance. The private school teachers, in particular, considered that the results had an impact on the number of students enrolled. The teachers believed that the parents were likely to register their child to a school where no students had low scores in the national examination (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.2). This evidence was consistent with Klenowski and Wyatt-Smith (2012: 67) who argue that the results of national assessments become “codes or indexes for the quality status of individual schools and education systems more generally” that would determine choices made by parents about where to send their

children. Using the scores gained in the national examination to monitor the quality of teaching practice also undermined Indonesian provision, for example, Endang said that his principal intended to replace the mathematics and natural science teachers as the students' scores of both subjects were relatively low (see Chapter 5 section 5.2.1).

The scores were also used for selection purposes: as the basis for admission to a particular school, especially a highly regarded state school. The analysis of the student focus group discussions indicated that most students believed that if they were to pursue their dreams of being successful in future, they had to do well in the national examination (see Chapter 6 section 6.2.1). The examination system witnessed during fieldwork suggested that parents had little free choice about which school would be best for their child. The parents were driven to send their child to the school identified by the result of their child's performance in the national examination. Parents such as Tari and Yani who had made a choice of school based on the students' interest (see Chapter 7 section 7.1.2) would have had to give up the pursuit of having their children attend schools well-suited to their aptitudes if the young people's examination scores were lower than those required by the chosen school.

This accountability tension, along with the high-stakes of the examination for students, created great anxiety amongst teachers, students and parents. The fear of failing in the national examination was a common concern. The higher level of anxiety described by Yani and Tari (as presented in Chapter 7 section 7.1.1), for example, clearly showed that they believed their children's dreams were at stake because the future depended on the results of the national examination. In the interview, Yani stated:

“She wants to study in an animation class. She likes doing IT, doing some stuff with her computer and she likes drawing... One thing that I concern is about the scores. I'm nervous since the scores of the national examination will determine to which school my daughter can enrol in. I want her to be accepted in the public vocational school in an urban area. As we know, that those who are not from the area where the school is located, are demanded to have higher scores to enrol in the public schools in that area. And there is only one state vocational school that has an animation major, so that's why I feel nervous” (Yani, individual interview p.3-5).

Religion is another contextual factor found in this study. The findings gathered from the participating parents suggested that they expected their child to be educated according to Islamic values. Wati, for example, was satisfied with her child's school

since her child recited the Holy Quran before the class started and said a prayer when the class ended (see Chapter 7 section 7.3.1).

The 2013 Act of Curriculum Implementation (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2013) emphasises the importance of parents getting involved in aspects of education, for example, supporting their children's academic progress or in choosing their schools. Evidence from this study indicated that the participating parents were at least partly involved in determining the school in which their child would enrol. However, the evidence relating to parental involvement in their children's academic progress was less clear. Although the parents reported that they encouraged their children to learn for the national examination, nine out of the ten parents interviewed suggested that they left their child to learn on their own. They did not indicate that they were involved in any significant way with their children's learning at home or school. They saw that role as belonging to the teacher, believing that the teachers would do what was necessary to help their children succeed.

Cizek (2001: 1) stated that "cheating by educators comes in many forms, ranging from the subtle coaching of students to the overt manipulation of test results". In this study, the scores determined the future of the students, the teachers and the school. The examination system they were involved in was considered so unfair that cheating, direct test preparation or violating standardisation procedures were perceived inevitable. Although there was no clear evidence showing that the participants in this study had corrupted the programs of the high-stakes national examination, several participating teachers hinted at such activities by saying certain words that I as an insider understand it as corruption practices. During the interviews, Endang, for example, said a word "help" several times and Ratna stated, "There is a way" when I asked how the teachers can help the students to graduate or gain admission in a state school. Those quotes I believe referred to the act of cheating done by the teachers to help the students gained high scores. The high stakes nature of the examination that was used as an entry requirement for the next level of schooling also caused some parents to attempt to bribe the state school (see Chapter 7 section 7.2.1).

Teaching and learning activities are supposed to create a positive learning environment that encourages students to learn. Yet, in this study, students in their final year perceived learning to be a demanding, repetitive experience dominated by homework and preparation for the national examination (see Chapter 6 section 6.1.1).

While the Indonesian Law of the National Education Standard (2005) highlighted the importance of developing the students' talents and creativity, this study suggested that the learning process was narrowed to learning what would be in the test. The goal of learning in the second semester was preparation for the national examination. Stobart (2008: 118) clearly described the issue:

“What is tested, especially if it carries important consequences, will determine what is taught and how it is taught. So this is a more direct route than patiently developing the curriculum and pedagogy – and it produces clear outcomes relatively cheaply.”

There was evidence of how existing gender inequality was used as a force to drive the educational experiences of young women. Participants reported a range of prejudicial practices against women, for example, threatening marriage if results were not sufficiently robust or restricting the education of girls by not allowing them to attend schools with boys. The evidence suggested that cultural beliefs common in the region where this study was conducted inhibited education for girls.

In the Indonesian culture, people also seem to be heavily influenced on what is viewed as important within their social and cultural groups (family, profession, tribe or nation). These commitments led people to give priority to the goals of their groups, as maintaining good social and cultural relationships was extremely important to them. Collectivism is the term used to refer to this feature of Indonesian society (Irawanto, 2009) and is a further social factor influencing the relationships between theories of learning and assessment within this particular context.

The next section of this chapter examines the seven social factors found crucial to understanding assessment washback in the study. The first section presents an overview of the discussion that led to the amended Baird et al. (2017) model. The chapter then discusses each of the seven contextual factors: Greater anxiety, Religion, Family expectation, Corruption, The goal of learning, Gender inequality in education and Collectivism. The final section offers further reflections on this study.

8.1 Greater anxiety

This section discusses the anxiety that the participants expressed regarding the national examination. The anxiety is related to the scores gained since these are used for accountability and selection purposes.

In 2015, the government enacted a regulation which required that the results of the national examination would be used as a basis to (1) evaluate the quality of education of schools throughout the nation, (2) select students for the next level of education, and (3) inform and grant funding schemes to support the improvement of the quality of education at school and county levels (Government Regulation Number 13 year 2015). This policy shift from the Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture seemed to recognise the need for teachers and students to focus their classroom activities less on training for the national examination and more on gaining knowledge and life-skills. There was a further attempt to strengthen this focus in the 2017 regulation about students' learning progress (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017). The 2017 regulation was intended to shift perceptions of the national examination towards lower-stakes assessment. However, well-intentioned these policies, the findings of this study did not indicate that the students and parents felt less pressure as a result of the application of these new regulations. The new policy on the assessment system in Indonesia alone is unlikely to change students' and parents' perceptions of the pressures emanating from the national examination.

This study indicated that the teachers were aware of the intention to implement the regulation; a few parents knew of the policy change, but most students and some parents did not. The analysis of the interview data suggested that most participants who experienced the fear of failing in the examination cited its impact on graduation. The relevant Indonesian Regulation from the Minister of Education and Culture (2015) does not intend that the results of the examination should be used as the sole source of evidence for graduation. The fear of failing in the examination emerged as a central concern shared by students, parents and teachers. However, some teachers believed that student stress kept students working hard. One teacher (Nopi), for example, purposely kept the students in ignorance of the 2015 regulation. This significant finding suggested even if the government sought to decrease the pressure of the national examination on students and parents unless changes in teacher attitudes accompanied this policy shift, changes to regulations were likely to be ignored. Students and parents kept uninformed of current policies.

The results of the analysis suggested that, amongst the three participating groups, teachers felt the greatest pressure from the national examination. Teachers perceived that they were responsible for helping the students to gain high scores, so the pressure on them was higher than that experienced by students and parents. Hattie (2003: 3)

claimed that the teacher was “the greatest source of variance that can make the difference”. A feeling of shame, referred by the two teachers, appeared to confirm this view that it was their responsibility if the students achieved only low scores. Compared to the parents, who had one child to be concerned about, or the students, who thought about the matter as individuals, the teachers had to make sure that every final year student they taught - that could be hundreds of them - succeeded in the national examination. As discussed in section 5.2.1, most of the teachers perceived that their professionalism was at stake, as the results would indicate the quality of their teaching. This study suggested that it was the national examination and its focus on the selection that caused this washback.

However, there was no indication in this study that the students or the parents put pressure directly on the teachers. The greater anxiety of failing in the national examination shown by the students and parents did not mean that they expected the teachers to do more. The findings of students’ focus group discussions presented in chapter 6 suggested that even though most students were anxious about the national examination, they did not feel it necessary to pressurise their teachers to help them gain high scores.

8.2 Religion

This section focuses on the findings relating to the participants’ beliefs about the place of religion and religious values in education.

Indonesia is a country where most citizens are deeply religious. This issue emerged as one of the major themes in this study. For example, leaving the fate of the national examination in God's hands emerged in Siti’s interview (see her full statement in section 7.1.1) when asked about her feelings about her child sitting the examination. Reliance on God caused Siti to be less anxious about her daughter's examination results. The impact of religious belief on stress has been reported elsewhere. For example, individuals with religious beliefs had lower anxiety in dealing with: cancer (Büssing et al., 2008), challenging and disturbing situations among college students (Bonab and Koohsar, 2011), and mothers with intellectually disabled children (Sharak et al., 2017). Siti’s statement during the interview added to evidence that her reliance on God helped her as a mother deal with her anxiety about her child's attainment.

Only Siti referred directly to the need to depend on God regarding the results of the examination. However, it is interesting to note that as Indonesia is the largest Muslim country and all participants in this study were Muslims a number of responses suggested that the participants referred to the religious values in their lives. Nopi, for example, said ‘God willing’ as the context for her effort to help her students prepare for the examination by holding an enhancement class. Tari also expressed a positive opinion about her child's current school as her son began class by reciting the Quran (see section 7.3.1). Ahmad's and Rizki's school preference for their child's next level of schooling (see section 7.1.1) also indicated that they believed that religious values were important in their child's education. However, the participants' responses also showed their anxiety and made reference to the effort required to tackle the challenges related to the national examination. These anxieties suggested the need for more than support from God was necessary for their child's results in the examination to be positive. These findings seem consistent with Naafs (2018), who suggests that the importance of religious values in Indonesia has lessened in recent years. The evidence from this study highlights the importance of shifting religious values among the participants as a factor associated with the washback effect of national examination on teachers, students and parents.

8.3 Family expectation

This section discusses factors involved in parents' decision making processes about the school in which their child would enrol. It also reflects on the apparent tensions between parents fearing that their child would fail the national examination yet playing little or no part in providing practical support by being involved in supporting at home their child's activities at school.

The fact that the national examination scores determined school access stressed most of the parents. Their strong desire to have their child enrolled in a certain school led the parents to be fearful waiting for the results of the national examination. However, the parental expectations of what would be regarded as a preferred school in the study were diverse. Three parents preferred state schools and, another four parents said they hoped their child would gain admission to a state vocational school. The other parent wanted his child to go to a medium-cost private school, one parent chose non-formal education due to their low personal socioeconomic circumstances, and one other

parent wanted to enrol his child in an Islamic private school (see section 7.1.1 and 7.1.2).

Affordability, the extent to which that the parents could pay for their children's education without needing to forgo spending on other essential elements of life was an issue emerging in this study. Parents' financial standing was a significant factor in determining the school that would be selected for their children. Interviews with the parents in this study showed that economic factors were a dominant factor in the decision making processes of school selection for lower socioeconomic status families. Siti, for example, chose a non-formal educational establishment for her daughter's next school (see section 7.1.1). Siti had a strong desire to support her children's education and would have preferred not to have her daughter study in a state school. The system applied by the government granted all citizens the right to enrol in a state school. However, this policy intended to support high-quality education for all put low socioeconomic families like Siti's in a dilemma. They found it challenging to compete with medium to high socioeconomic families academically and financially. Inadequate provision of high-quality private schooling in the county led more affluent families to choose the state school nearest to their homes. There are insufficient spaces in state schools, and often children from lower socioeconomic status families were not able to access a place at their preferred state school.

The correlation between parental involvement and students' achievement has been an issue of interest to other researchers (Bogenschneider, 1997; Fan and Chen, 2001; Davis-Kean, 2005; Yulianti, 2015). However, the results of this study show that unlike findings in other countries, in Indonesia, parents seem to blame the schools and teachers when the students gain low scores in the national examination. In the interviews with three private school teachers, they argued that parents would not enrol their child in a school if there was a student who failed the examination (see Chapter 5 section 5.2.2). Epstein (1985: 18) suggests that schools could be improved if there was an understanding between schools and families, teachers and parents about "each other's potential for improving the education of the children". The concerns about involving parents in education that most of the teachers suggested during the interviews could have been triggered because they believed they were being held fully responsible for the students. Harlen (2010: 40) argues that collaborative relationships would be difficult to establish if 'students and parents expect teachers to be the only ones to say how students are doing'. The results of the national examination in Indonesia would rely solely on the

teachers' role, and parents appeared reluctant to see themselves as partners in their children's education. The teachers took responsibility for the students' success in the national examination on their own.

8.4 Corruption

Bribery to gain admission (see section 7.2.1) and cheating at examination (see section 7.2.3) were issues raised by two parents in this study, which indicated that, unfortunately, corrupt practices seem to still occur in education in Indonesia. As an insider in this research: an Indonesian citizen who understands the language codes, I also identified a number of teachers' statements during the interview that referred to corrupt practices happening in their schools. The fact that participating teachers did not openly challenge those corrupt practices in the interviews would suggest to me that such activities may have been acceptable in their view. They were aware of corruption as reported in the national media (Radiansyah, 2013; Darmaningtyas, 2014) but preferred not to comment on it. They seemed to prefer or may have felt that they had no option but to work within the corrupt system rather than to risk being rejected by the system. This description is consistent with my own experience of being blacklisted in the district, where I reported cheating activity in the examination (see Chapter 1). In 2017, a number of news media outlets in Indonesia reported corruption in the education system carried out by the chief of the local police working with a successful entrepreneur in North Sumatera (Assifa, 2017; Dadan, 2017; Jawapos, 2017; Rosa, 2017; Sohuturon, 2017; Tribunnews, 2017). Reports of their action went viral throughout the country. They had used letters signed by a local authority certifying that they came from low-socioeconomic families to gain admission for their children in a state school in Medan. Their professions, however, clearly indicated that they would not be entitled to be considered as lower-income families. Examples like this illustrate how comparatively wealthy families gain admission to state schools through corrupt practices.

Heyneman (2004: 637) defined institutional corruption as "the abuse of authority for personal as well as material gain". Some private school teachers in this study indicated that the results of the national examination had an impact on the number of students enrolled (see section 5.2.2) and the teachers' reputation based on the school principal's judgement (see section 5.2.1). There was evidence that several teachers believed that cheating or direct test preparation was justified while on the other hand, the participating teachers considered the national examination was unfair. Where

schools and teachers perceived the results of the national examination played a significant role in the accountability system, they appeared to accept that corrupt practices such as cheating in the examination are inevitable. Teachers could choose to turn a blind eye when witnessing bribery to gain admission or cheating practices during the national examination. They would never report colleagues, as a consequence for not following the 'rules' would be losing one's job. The process that emphasised the scores gained in the national examination increased the likelihood of cheating. The dishonest practices appeared to have a particularly powerful effect on families in lower socioeconomic circumstances as they faced greater difficulty in accessing education and were left with no alternative other than to enrol their children in lower-quality educational alternatives. In consequence, this reduced the likelihood of their children being able to use education as a way out of poverty. This was not the original policy intention.

The intention to ensure that all students could gain access to education was the driving force behind the Indonesian government's plan called BOS (School Operational Funds), a programme for primary and junior secondary schools to guarantee nine years of compulsory education. Since BOS was introduced in 2005, the government has provided funding for every student in primary and junior secondary schools throughout the country. The funds were initially targeted towards support for low socioeconomic families (Ministry of National Education, 2007). In practice, this plan was of greater benefit to the medium to high socioeconomic status families, enabling them to have free education, especially in state schools. Siti's statement in responding to a question about state school enrolment also showed that the funds were inadequate to cover the cost of the school as schools ended up charging fees or asking for donations, despite the regulations.

Although the grant is intended for students, the government transfers the money to the school's bank account. The amount transferred may vary as it depends on how many students the school enrolls (Al-Samarrai, 2014). For a junior secondary school, the school is expected to receive 1 million rupiahs (approximately £61.67 - exchange rate 13 February 2017) a year per student. The more students the school has, the more money the school would receive from the government. Low-cost private schools have typically been established to provide educational opportunities for students with low scores in the primary school final examination and who came from low socioeconomic status families. It had been widely acknowledged in Indonesia that public schools are

often not totally 'free' and often require financial contributions and payments. In a study analysing the implementation of universal basic of free education in Indonesia, Rosser and Joshi (2013) divided the 'illegal' fees into two axes: legal/illegal and formal/informal (see figure 8-4).

	Legal	Illegal
Informal	A Tokens of gratitude e.g. gifts to teachers at the end of the school year	B Bribes, extortion e.g. payments to teachers to ensure a child is promoted or receives good grades
Formal	C User charges and voluntary contributions e.g. registration and tuition fees (if permitted by law), genuinely voluntary contributions	D Top-ups for providing services e.g. registration and tuition fees (if not permitted by law), overcharging on legal fees

Figure 8-4_A typology of user fees in primary education (Rosser & Joshi, 2013: 177)

Consistent with McLoughlin's (2013) findings in her study of the effectiveness of low-cost private schools in Asia and Africa, parents in this investigation widely acknowledged that state schools were not entirely free, as they required financial contributions and travel costs. In theory, it was free to study at a state school, but in reality, the school would collect money from the parents. Bangay (2005: 168) showed that "though government schools are funded by government and managed by civil servants, they still raise funds (often at significant levels) from various levies exacted from parents". As published in JakartaGlobe (2011), Indonesian Corruption Watch reported that many junior secondary school parents admitted making unofficial payments to the school ranging from 750,000 to 1 million rupiahs (between £45 to £60 - exchange rate 13 February 2017). The school charged these payments for uniforms or book fees, admission charges or voluntary donations. In a context where the average monthly income is 2 million rupiahs (£121 – exchange rate 13 February 2017), these additional expenses are likely to be an obstacle for low socio-economic status families such as Siti's who wish to access the state school (see section 7.1.1). This evidence conflicts with the findings of Ashley et al. (2014), who showed that parents preferred a state school to a private school in terms of the cost. The review undertaken by Ashley et al. (2014: 46) on the impact of private schools on the education of school-aged children in developing countries indicated that "private schools tend to be more expensive to users in terms of costs of school fees and other hidden costs such as books and

uniforms, although there is some variation in certain contexts”. The situation that emerged in this study painted a more complex picture.

8.5 The goal of learning

The learning process proposed in the Government Regulation Number 32 (2013) is intended to provide opportunities for students to improve their skills, creativity and independence by creating learning atmospheres in schools that are interactive, inspiring, fun yet challenging. This section discusses the evidence emerging from this study that suggests that the goal of learning for final year students was very different. It was focussed on gaining high scores in the national examination.

Challenges that most of the teachers reported facing in teaching the final year students were related to their behaviour (see section 5.3.1). The teachers believed that the goal of the curriculum was to build ‘strong characters’ as stated in the regulation (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2012). They reported that they had a responsibility not only for teaching the curriculum content but also for educating their students on how to behave. However, neither students nor parents in this study indicated that becoming a person (Rogers, 1957) was a major purpose of learning at school. They suggested that the goals of learning related to the students’ academic and career futures, not for building their character or helping them to become future citizens. There were different perceptions among teachers, students and parents, where the teachers included behaviour as one of the elements in teaching as a means of control while the students and parents suggested that education at school was intended only to help them gain admission to the next level of schooling and gain a better career in the future.

The use of the results of the national examination for accountability purposes was intended to improve the quality of schools and the education system, as stated in the Government Law Number 19/2005 article 68. The government intended to analyse the results of the national examination and to use that evidence to provide support for the schools who achieved results below national expectations. However, this use of assessment data led the stakeholders, including the participating teachers and students, to focus on the results of the national examination rather than on the process of learning. The scores could have been used as a tool to measure the students’ competence and areas for future growth. Used in that way, the evidence could have created a positive washback on the stakeholders, including teachers, students and parents and the results

could have been used to support improvement. However, the scores became measures of the success or failure of teachers and schools.

The findings from this study also showed that the obsession with examination scores meant that other factors that might influence student learning gains were neglected. These factors include school conditions, school attendance and “a variety of out-of-school learning experiences”, parents’ support, “family resources, student health, family mobility, and the influence of neighbourhood peers and of classmates who may be relatively more advantaged or disadvantaged” (Baker et al., 2010: 3).

That a high-stakes test would be likely to impact on the depth of learning, as stated in Alderson and Wall’s (1993) hypothesis, was confirmed in this study. It was evident that the national examination narrowed the depth of learning and teaching in the first semester of the final year focused entirely on what would be tested. The findings also showed that more than half of the teachers continued to focus on teaching for the national examination during the second semester. During this time, teaching focussed on teaching to the tests: the teachers gave out past examination papers and practice tests and coached the students on how to beat the questions of the examination by showing them tricks rather than focussing on deep learning. The students reported to apply a strategic learning approach as they focussed on the memorisation of materials likely to come up in the examination. The results of the focus group discussions in this study indicated that the students preferred strategic learning, as their goal was focussed on gaining high scores in the national examination.

Research (for example, Baird et al., 2016: 363) suggested that making connections between curriculum content and what is tested in the national examination tends to help children “to form an understanding of the deep structure of a discipline and to ‘chunk’ packets of information.” However, more than half of the participants in this study shared a belief that the best way to learn for the national examination was not to master the curriculum but to know the tricks for success in the examination. The drilling in preparation for the national examination was widely accepted by the stakeholders, including the parents. Popham (2001: 21) criticised drilling as an approach, since:

“such repetitious instructional activities tend to deaden students’ genuine interest in learning. All the excitement and intellectual vibrancy that students might encounter during a really interesting lesson are driven out by a tedious, test-fostered series of drills. In fact, one fairly certain way of

telling whether a high-stakes test is a winner or loser is to see if unexciting drill activities can actually raise students' test scores. If so, the test is almost certainly inappropriate—measuring only low-level outcomes”.

Strategic learning activities were rife in Indonesia included attending cram schools and practising exam-like questions in school and at home. Examination scores were seen to define learning and exam coaching occurred. Student learning after school was clearly described in the students' focus group discussions and the parents' interviews (see chapter 6 and 7). Even though the majority of students and parents appeared to assume that the exam preparation in school was sufficient, three students (see section 6.3.3) spoke of attending a private cram school, which aimed to drill students in exam-like questions and past examination papers. Bray (2006) suggested that private tutoring or attending a cram school, a practice which had grown widely in Asian countries including Indonesia, was to help the students achieve high examination scores as a means of accessing a highly prestigious next level of schooling. Drilling was a recognised strategy to make students proficient at passing the national examination, as the cram school helped them master the past examination papers and find tricks to beat the test. Three mothers who were interviewed indicated that they sent their child to a cram school to have better preparation for the national examination (see 7.3.2).

8.6 Gender inequality in education

Three elements emerged from the analysis of this study indicating gender inequality in Indonesian education: inequality between daughters and sons, female preference as regards the next level of schooling and early female marriage.

For example, Siti decided to register her daughter in a government non-formal school after she graduated from junior secondary school. Meanwhile, her son was studying in an Islamic boarding school. Siti perceived that the central role of a woman was to bear a child and to serve males. This belief had influenced her decision not to enrol her daughter in a boarding school where its tuition fee is relatively higher than a state school. She criticised the high the cost of going to a state school for her daughter while during the interview she did not raise any issues in having a son who studied in a far more expensive boarding school (see section 7.1.1).

The second element of gender inequality in education is illustrated in the schools preferred by female participating students. All of the female students in the participating

state school identified vocation schools as their preferred next level of schooling (see section 6.2.1). This finding indicated that they believed they would not go to higher education. There is evidence that vocational graduates could earn more than senior secondary school graduates, and this may also be a factor in the girls' decisions (Newhouse and Suryadarma, 2011). A vocational school emphasises skills that prepare the students to be ready to work as soon as they graduate. Its curriculum is intended to prepare the students to work rather than to study in higher education. In her article describing experiences and feelings of educated yet unmarried women in Indonesia, Retnaningsih (2013: 6) claimed that:

“Indonesian society assumes that being married to an educated career woman will lead such a woman's husband to feel less capable economically and/or psychologically and to feel insecure about losing his authority.”

As a female Indonesian citizen myself, I know that in some areas in Indonesia, many people still hold this belief. Some parents (including my mother and relatives) consider that a woman does not need to go to higher education as she will end up being a wife who stays in a house doing chores.

The issue of early marriage is another factor that emerged in this study. Such activity appeared to be commonly accepted in the area where this study was conducted. Being married is the reality that female students were likely to face as soon as they finish their study in junior secondary school, as stated by Mahmud who was teaching at a low-cost private school (see section 5.3.1). UNICEF (2018) noted that around 650 million girls and women were married before they reached age 18. Indonesia still faces the issue of early female marriage.

Siti used the threat of marriage to her daughter to make her study. This study provides further evidence of the considerable impact of early marriage on girls' education in Indonesia. There are still discriminatory practices in how parents treated their sons compared to their daughters. Boys were more likely to have better educational opportunities than girls since boys were perceived to need to support the family economy while sending girls to school would be disadvantageous as in the end their education would lead only to marriage.

8.7 Collectivism

Collectivism is “a social or cultural tradition, ideology, or personal outlook that emphasizes the unity of the group or community rather than each person’s individuality” (VandenBos, 2015:211). This section focusses on how collectivism, as a critical feature of culture in Indonesia, influenced the participants’ feeling and attitudes towards the national examination.

Three teachers and one parent in this study made specific reference to collectivism and its impact on the context and culture of the national examination. It suggested that the scores in the examination were not only a judgement of individuals but also an essential factor in family society. For example, all four participants believed that they represented themselves not only as individuals but also as members of a particular family and of society. As a member of society and a family, these participants felt shame if the children for whom they were responsible failed the examination.

Another teacher who did not refer to the shame of failure also demonstrated the impact of her collectivist belief. At the beginning of her interview, she stated that her decision to become a teacher came from family members who had a similar profession to hers. This situation motivated her to spend her own money on rewarding the students who gained a perfect score in the English examination. Having students gain a perfect score was a source of pride. She stated that the reward was intended to motivate the students to learn, but it was her position as a proud member of a family of teachers that led her to sacrifice her own time and to give her own money to reward her students’ learning. The collectivism belief, although it is common in Indonesia (Triandis, et al., 1986; Lukviarman, 2004; Irawanto, 2009) has not been considered in any previous Indonesian research studying the national examination and related teaching practices.

This study suggested a complex interrelationship between three elements that influence teacher agency: context, content and personality (Kagan, 1992). Past examination papers had become the curriculum, but this position sat uncomfortably with the teachers’ own beliefs as they were aware that teaching and learning in their schools and classrooms should not have been based on the guidelines for the examination but the Indonesian curriculum. The impact of the national examination on the number of students enrolled in a particular school the following year also influenced teachers’ views of what mattered as their principle learning goal. If their school was to

remain open, and they were to remain in post, their teaching practices had to focus on performance goals that put most emphasis on students gaining high scores in the national examination. Thus, teachers' ability to apply their beliefs in practice consistently was obstructed by contextual factors, for example, students, schools and societal beliefs that led to a powerful washback emerging from the national examination.

Summary of chapter 8

This chapter reflected on the results of the findings emerging from teachers' interviews, students' focus groups and parents' interviews. Seven critical factors outlined in Figure 8-3 have been discussed further, to explore the complexities of the national examination as experienced by participants.

The findings and relevant literature reflected that relationships between theories of learning and assessment proposed by Baird et al. (2017) were influenced by a number of further factors related to the social contexts where the study took place. Factors including greater anxiety, religion, family expectation, corruption, the goal of learning, gender inequality in education and collectivism, elements that it is necessary to consider to understand the nature of washback of the national examination in Indonesia. Without exploring the social contexts and the problems embedded within these contexts, negative washback would remain and inevitably learning and assessment would be fragmented.

The next chapter will present an overview of the study and will reflect on implications for theory and practice. The limitations of the study and possible issues for further research will be considered. The chapter will conclude with my reflections on my own learning journey during this study.

Chapter 9 : Implications

Overview

Chapter 8 reflected on seven elements identified from this study's findings described in detail in the three previous chapters (Chapters 5, 6 and 7). The seven social factors found in the study were embedded in the theories of learning and assessment diagram by Baird et al. (2017).

Chapter 9 now aims to present a number of implications from this research. The chapter begins with a review of the purposes of the study discussing their relevance. Next, implications for practice and further research are outlined. A discussion of the study's limitations is also presented, followed by a reflection on my learning journey, which closes the chapter.

9.1 Review of the study

This study set out to explore the potential washback effect of the English national examination in Bandung, Indonesia, through a case study approach by gathering and analysing stakeholders' perspectives of their practices over the academic year 2015-2016. The participants included teachers, students and parents. Previous literature had suggested that washback could involve a range of historical, social, cultural, political and contextual factors and I was interested in exploring how the issue of high-stakes assessment washback might emerge in Indonesia by exploring the views of teachers, students and parents. The teachers', students', and parents' perspectives of their experiences with the high-stakes assessment highlighted the influence of this testing on practices in classrooms, schools and families.

The thesis set out to explore the question, "*How does the national examination influence feelings, perceptions and practices of teachers, students and parents in the Indonesian context?*" To answer the question, past research on washback was studied with particular emphasis on the national examination in the local context of Indonesia. It soon became clear that although significant research-based around washback had been conducted in different settings and methods, studies to date that interrogated the impact of such high-stakes assessment on teaching, learning and parenting practices in the Indonesian context were limited (Chapter 3). While a variety of definitions of the term 'washback' have been suggested (Alderson and Wall, 1993; Andrews et al., 2002), this study used the definition suggested by Pearson (1988: 98) who stated that "It is

generally accepted that public examinations influence the attitudes, behaviour and motivation of teachers, learners and parents”. A strong relationship between a high-stakes test and classroom practice had been reported in the literature worldwide (Shephard & Dougherty, 1991; Green, 2006; Cheng, 2005) and this study demonstrated that this was also true in an Indonesian context. Teachers are recognised as critical mediators in the students’ classroom learning experiences (Flórez & Sammons, 2013; Suryahadi & Sambodho, 2013) and are likely to seek to prepare students to be successful in national examination. This can lead to the washback effect described above and there was clear evidence of this in the schools in Indonesia in this study. The teachers appeared trapped in an examination preparation cycle where they taught the students how to ‘trick’ the test and, thus, they seemed not to teach the essence of the subject matter in any depth (e.g. Sukyadi and Mardiani, 2011; Mukminin et al., 2013).

However, this study in Indonesia demonstrated that the diagram proposed by Baird et al. (2017) to explain the relationship between learning and assessment theories did not have the necessary explanatory power in the context of Indonesia. In Chapter 8, a new diagram embedding was presented to include seven key social factors that influenced the enactment of theories of learning and assessment. In this final chapter (Chapter 9), I turn to the identification of implications emerging from this study for different stakeholders. This study provides clear evidence of the significant washback effect of the national examination on teachers, students and parents in Indonesia. Here I offer suggestions for policymakers and others to consider as collectively they strive to meet the needs of a nation with a massive and diverse population in ways that are likely to have assessment contribute to the creation of a positive rather than negative washback in the classroom.

9.2 Implications for practice

The implications take the form of several suggestions. They include implications for teachers, students, parents and policymakers.

9.2.1 Teachers

Several recommendations can be suggested to teachers who teach final year students in the junior secondary schools and whose subjects are tested in the national examination in Indonesia. It is clear from the study that the teachers stated that they modified their teaching in the second semester to focus on testing preparation. This study also showed that the teachers believed that the national examination was vital in

terms of their accountability, a situation that leads teachers to put pressure on their students. The discussions with the students suggested that the teachers had no intention of shielding the students from anxiety about the national examination.

There is, in Indonesia, a need for significant investment in professional learning. One major focus should be on the potential benefit in using formative assessment more in the classroom to enhance the students' learning (Black & William, 2010) and ultimately better manage their examination anxiety. Teachers need to be convinced that both formative and summative assessments are essential and that by increasing their focus on formative assessment approaches, they will be better able to teach a diverse student population. If they were to focus more on giving valuable descriptive feedback through formative assessment, it is more likely to boost the students' performance in the national examination than the arid test rehearsal that is current practice.

Professional learning in Indonesia should also focus on why the current context causes problems for student learning. For example, when teaching is constrained by standardised summative assessment as in the Indonesian national examination, narrowing the curriculum is inevitable. This approach to teaching and learning may also undermine students' ability to gain a deep understanding of the curriculum and restrict their opportunities to apply their knowledge. Failure to develop a deep understanding of the subjects is inconsistent with the teachers' original objectives of teaching in the classroom.

Teaching in Indonesia might helpfully be considered in terms of Strong's (2011) definition of a highly qualified teacher when considering what their practice might become. He identified a teacher as someone who is competent in terms of reflective competence, personal and psychological qualities, pedagogical standards and their ability as a teacher to motivate students to learn. Whilst this would represent a long journey for teachers in Indonesia, having an agreed vision for the future model of what it is to be a teacher in Indonesia is an essential first step.

9.2.2 Students

High-stakes assessment, such as the national examination in Indonesia might motivate some students to learn, but on the other hand, it is likely to discourage others. Students need to have greater responsibility for their learning. A good predictor of students' actual performance depends on their perception of their performance (Ames and Archer, 1988). Black and Wiliam (2010:7) indicated that if the students use self-

assessment, “they can understand the main purposes of their learning and thereby grasp what they need to do to achieve”. Successful learning should mean more than success in examination and should help students to build knowledge and understanding in the classroom that can be of use to them in their lives. This kind of learning experience is more likely to take place when students have opportunities to reflect and to consider how what was learned about one situation can be related to different situations such as future classes, home situations and work situations in the future. OECD and CERI – Center for Educational Research and Innovation (2008: 1) stated in the 2008 OECD/CERI International Conference that teaching practices incorporated with formative assessment “[have] helped to raise levels of student achievement, and [have] better enabled teachers to meet the needs of increasingly diverse student populations, helping to close gaps in equity of student outcomes.”

Classroom practices in Indonesia need to change to make such new pedagogies part of classroom practice and this will only happen if there is an investment in teachers and changes to the education system that require different pedagogical practices, for example, changes to the examination system that require different student capabilities.

9.2.3 Parents

Davies-Kean (2005) pointed out that the child’s level of expectation of graduating and continuing to a higher level was affected by the stimulation the child had at home and the quality of the interaction between parent and child. Recommendations arising from this study suggest a need for there to be a significant focus on changing attitudes in society. This is a major challenge. However, unless a start is made to begin the process of change, young people, particularly girls, will continue to be disadvantaged and Indonesian society will fail to benefit from the potential contribution that women can make in their society. The findings from this study illustrated the scale of change required. First, conversations need to begin with parents about what motivates young people to learn. Neither the threat of early marriage nor setting specific targets for a child to gain in the examination creates a positive influence on children’s motivation to learn. Secondly, families play a significant part in shaping a child’s life. The findings of this study indicated that parents mostly did not show interest in the activities their child did in school and the classroom. Improving parental participation in learning activities is likely to improve students’ academic and personal development. Teaching students is not solely the teachers’ responsibility; the parents also play an essential role in teaching the students. In accomplishing a learning goal, it is essential to focus on both intrinsic

and extrinsic motivations simultaneously. Having a supportive home environment can affect the academic performance of a student. These are conversations that have to begin within communities and educationalists working with community leaders might be best placed on organising events where these conversations can be facilitated.

9.2.4 Policymakers

Policymakers have a key role to play in exploring how issues identified in previous sections in this chapter might best be addressed. For example, how high-quality collaborative Professional Learning might be managed at scale within Indonesia, learning from past mistakes where international experts were brought in to tell Indonesia what to do. Alternatively considering how local and national governments might work together with local communities to find ways to involve parents more constructively in their children's education. However, perhaps the most significant contribution that policymakers could make quickly would be for them to review the policy that establishes the standardised test that is the national examination as an attempt to measure the quality of education in Indonesia. It is clear from wider evidence in this study that policymakers need to identify alternative educational levers to promote a more successful education system. In the 2014 United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) report, Indonesia came last amongst its neighbouring countries: Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Thailand (see Table 9-1). Indonesia is described as a medium developing country yet was in 108th place among countries worldwide in the 2014 Human Development Index. Every year, UNDP (2014: 163) measures the human development index of countries worldwide based on three elements of human development; "a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living". Table 9-1 below shows the pattern of Human Development data. In every year from 1980 until 2013, the pattern has remained the same; Indonesia has performed comparatively poorly despite the constant attempts to improve education by changing policy.

Country	Human Development Index									2013 Rank
	1980	1990	2000	2005	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Singapore		0.744	0.800	0.840	0.868	0.894	0.896	0.899	0.901	9
Brunei Darussalam	0.740	0.786	0.822	0.838	0.843	0.844	0.846	0.852	0.852	30
Malaysia	0.577	0.641	0.717	0.747	0.760	0.766	0.768	0.770	0.773	62
Thailand	0.503	0.572	0.649	0.685	0.704	0.715	0.716	0.720	0.722	89
Indonesia	0.471	0.528	0.609	0.640	0.654	0.671	0.678	0.681	0.683	108

Table 9-1_Intervals of Human Development Index adopted from UNDP (2014: 164-165)

Suryadarma and Jones (2013) showed that PISA results indicated that Indonesian students are three years behind the OECD average in reading and mathematics. None of the participants in this study, however, were aware of the existence of any international tests. The group participants assumed that accountability was based solely on the scores gained in the national examination. The policymakers might support that assumption. They often promise rewards for schools that have high scores in the national examination and sanction those that do not. Mansell, James and the Assessment Reform Group (2009) imply that using certain forms of assessment for monitoring purposes might have negative impacts on the quality of education in the school. PISA has many flaws (Volante, 2015); however, the Indonesian scores do not suggest that students in Indonesia are being well served by their education system. Nor does it appear that the national preoccupation with the National Examination is improving education.

There is little evidence internationally to support the view that high stakes testing leads to an improved education system. Yet, attempts by governments to use high stakes testing for that purpose have become an international phenomenon. Although attempting to improve the education system in Indonesia (and in other countries worldwide) is an admirable aspiration, a government strategy that seeks to use high stakes tests as a major driver to improve the quality of education serves principally to create a stressful environment for schools and teachers. This drive for improvement has also led to pressure on teaching and learning in classrooms. Cheng's analysis of Hong Kong's classroom practices (2005: 44) makes the points clearly:

“Teachers tend to look at prior tests to make sure that their instruction includes all or most of the test content, and plan to ensure that they cover all test objectives. They also adjust their instructional plans and the sequence of their curriculum based on the test performance of the class they had the previous year”.

There is an indication that the national examination in Indonesia has placed heavy pressure on stakeholders, especially the teachers. The findings of this study include strong evidence that participating teachers and students narrowed the curriculum to the materials that might be tested in the national examination. The teachers adjusted their teaching to reflect the types of questions found on the examinations. They also drilled the students on test content and question styles in order to improve responses to the national examination. Using this evidence to designing an assessment system that is fit for the purpose should be a priority for the government, especially for the Minister of Education and Culture. The government needs to clarify the distinction between the

intended use of the national examination and its actual use. What should be taught and assessed should be aligned and understood similarly by stakeholders and policymakers. Perhaps consideration should be given to alternative ways of collecting national data, ones less likely to create such a profound washback effect. For example, the government might create a national sample-based assessment design that could provide information about the student performance nationally and regionally which could also factor in information regarding students' socioeconomic status, their approaches to learning and their learning environments. This kind of assessment could achieve more effectively one of the national examination's current purposes, i.e., to provide information to the system on the quality of the education programme.

The Education Law No 23 2016 puts a strong emphasis on the role of the national examination in the allocation of the school grant provided by the government to support less advantaged families. The findings from this study appear to indicate that the scores gained in the national examination do not provide reliable evidence to serve this purpose. The government tends to pay more attention to state schools while the case studies I conducted show that the majority of students in the state schools come from middle to high socioeconomic status families while for complex reasons more disadvantaged families prefer to enrol their children in low-cost private schools. This situation should direct the government to allocate greater funding to low-cost schools where students from the low socioeconomic status study. To provide better facilities and to enhance the learning environment (renovating the school building, for example), the government could reduce the amount of BOS for the state schools and provide more grants for low-cost private schools. By doing so, the government could contribute to greater equity in education across the nation.

The second purpose of the national examination, as stated in the 2016 Education Law is to determine student admission to their next educational level. This practice tends to benefit high socioeconomic students as they may have more opportunities to gain high scores in the national examination than the students from lower socioeconomic families. The government seems to neglect the other factors that might influence the performance of the students when they are sitting the national examination. The factors include school conditions, school attendance and "a variety of out-of-school learning experiences", parents' support, "family resources, student health, family mobility, and the influence of neighbourhood peers and of classmates who may be relatively more advantaged or disadvantaged" (Baker et al., 2010: 3).

The sense of the unfairness of the national examination was confirmed by several teachers and students in this study. Some students in the focus group discussions assumed that there was no relationship between the curriculum they were learning in the classroom and the materials tested in the national examination. For this condition to improve, the government will need to ensure that policy designed to improve school performance brings a better balance between the use of the national examination and classroom assessment. However, this may also require a shift in government thinking as members of the current government still believe that the national examination is the best driver for school improvement (Detik, 2014).

Nevertheless, this study suggests that the national examination intensifies teaching to the test in the classroom. The government might prioritise the development of an assessment system that creates lower anxiety among teachers, students and parents. Any national strategy to improve the educational system should include careful monitoring and evaluation of the performance of students not only in the final year but in every grade level. Designing a curriculum and assessment system that seeks to increase critical and analytical thinking and specific life-skills will encourage the kinds of deep learning in the classroom that would be consistent with the governments' future educational plans (Law of Education, 2003). If appropriately implemented, such a strategy would have a positive effect on teaching practices, and eventually, on the effectiveness of the educational system.

9.3 Limitations of the study

While this inquiry has contributed crucial insights into understanding how the participants perceived the washback of the national examination on their practices, the limitations of the research need to be acknowledged. The research was conducted in Kabupaten Bandung, which had 478 junior secondary schools (Ministry of Education and Culture). Conducting the study in all of these junior secondary schools would not have been possible due to time constraints and the location of each school. Therefore, schools in only one district were selected to participate in the study. However, the area had a number of advantages that made it an ideal population to be included in this study; there were 18 junior secondary schools of different qualities, physical infrastructures and facilities. The cohort of schools was divided into four categories; state school, low-, medium-, and high-cost private schools. Comparing the teachers who taught at private schools with those in public schools offered the potential to see if there were any major differences between teachers in high-achieving and low-achieving

schools. Cohen (2000: 103) emphasizes that “in purposive sampling, researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment of their typicality.”

As the study was conducted in the second semester of the academic year in the chosen schools, some teachers refused to be interviewed. They argued that they had busy schedules in the second semester, with only three months left to present materials for the examination. This study also showed the difficulty of meeting the teachers at school. Some teachers who taught in private schools were only there when they had a class. They did not respond when they were contacted via text message or by phone, even though the school principals had granted consent.

Another limitation that emerged during the study included difficulties in gaining access to the parents’ houses. The initial plan was to have twenty parents participate in semi-structured interviews. Four junior secondary schools were asked to provide the addresses of five parents each to be interviewed. It was not easy to find the actual locations of the addresses provided for the parents’ houses. The Indonesian system of addresses is complex. In the end, ten parents (seven female and three male) participated in the interviews. Eight parents were interviewed in their houses while two of them were interviewed in their workplace. This kind of interview facilitated the gathering of productive qualitative conversations, in which interviewees opened up about their views.

This study provided a number of implications and practical suggestions; however it might be argued that these are contextually bound to the participants and the schools. Despite the researcher’s best intentions, bias is also possible as case studies are often selective, personal and subjective (Gerring, 2006; Cohen et al., 2011; Newby, 2014). However, this study offers in-depth findings that might not be achieved with other methodologies. For example, large-scale data questionnaires would be unlikely to have captured the uniqueness and specific characteristics that can emerge in a case study approach. Newby (2014: 104) indicates that a qualitative study emphasizes “wholeness and detailed connections between our social worlds, emotional and cognitive processes and economic circumstances”. This study suggested that there was a connection between parents’ educational background and their children’s outcomes.

9.4 Issues for future research

This study has explored the case study teachers', parents' and students' perspectives on the impact of the national examination on their practices. Though a number of interesting findings arise from this study, this research has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation. For example, how does socioeconomic status influence parents' attitudes towards the national examination? Or what is the impact of the national examination on low-cost private schools' practices? Or what would teachers' views be about the possibility of introducing assessment for learning into their teaching practices? Or what would be stakeholders' perspectives of what might happen if the high-stakes testing of the national examination were to be ended? Without a doubt, further work is needed in this area.

A number of participants in this study expressed concerns about the unfairness of the national examination as the final year students all over the country would have the same test. Although this might seem odd, it is a position that reflects the variation of the facilities that each school has. Throughout this study, many of the issues expressed had to be related to policy, yet in this study, they had no voice. In a future study, the policymakers' voice should also be investigated to explore their perceptions, and in particular their willingness to support alternative ways to raise educational standards in Indonesia. A shared concern to improve the educational experiences of young people in Indonesia may be an important common ground on which to base future discussions.

A more in-depth investigation of students' views is also suggested. Gathering students in a group discussion may not give sufficient information about how each student reacts to the national examination. It would be interesting to compare the experiences of individuals within the same school and to compare perspectives about what is perceived as the washback effect of the national examination. Conducting individual interviews with students might explore more deeply how each student experiences their final year.

Interviews in neutral settings would perhaps also have provided a different type of interview with teachers. The suggestion that follows for educational researchers in Indonesia is that they might need to arrange sufficient time to gain access to interview the participants in their houses or workplaces (as with the parents' interviews in this study). In a different context, teachers may have been willing to be more open. Researchers should also consider interviewing participants via Skype if the possibility

of gaining access is limited. Collecting data in remote areas during the rainy season might be avoided to prevent the flood issue as it happened while carrying this study.

One avenue for further study would also be comparative research between stakeholders at primary, junior secondary and senior secondary schools. As the national examination in Indonesia is used for selection purposes, it would be valuable to involve a large number of respondents from three levels of education as this might provide a more conclusive result concerning how the national examination and its washback effects are perceived. The involvement of teachers and students from different levels of schooling might suggest varied responses for comparison and in-depth analysis.

Another potential area to be carried out is to begin to build case studies in schools where Assessment for Learning is in action. As the model emphasizes the use of formative feedback and self- and peer-assessment (Black et al., 2003), school stakeholders might be encouraged to consider that successful learning does not only mean gaining high scores in a test. Finally, another interesting issue that could be explored is how the assessment system in Indonesia works compared with neighbouring countries such as Malaysia or Singapore. Carrying out a comparative study across different countries in the region might provide varied data to contrast with the results of this study.

Gender inequality was not the main issue explored in this study. However, the evidence emerging from the analysis indicated that gender is a major issue and that gendered practices are still common among parents. A further study is needed to investigate whether cultural or religious beliefs held by Indonesian parents are a factor underlying the inequality in education.

9.5 Personal learning journey

As someone who was formerly an English teacher in Indonesia, this PhD experience has been a dynamic professional learning experience for me. Undertaking this study has enabled me to integrate previous experiences into understanding the washback of the national examination with new insights and has taught me to undertake systematic social research. Through this journey of taking a PhD, I have learnt several lessons, including how to read and reflect on a range of relevant literature. Within this four-year journey, I have met international experts and have learned that they are not gurus who can tell Indonesia what to do but people with whom Indonesia can learn and, perhaps, who can learn from what is happening in Indonesia. A particular highlight for

me has been meeting other PhD students from different countries who provided meaningful experiences from a wide range of contexts and who helped me to understand just how important context is.

This study has raised some interesting issues that could be discussed nationally and internationally. Reflecting the experiences of being blacklisted in the district as a consequence for reporting on cheating (see Chapter 1 section 1.3) with the findings of this study, have helped me to understand my own experiences and for me to feel more in control of my emotions about them. If Indonesia is to become a fairer country, issues like this need to be recognised, discussed and addressed.

As a daughter, I experienced the kind of inequality in education that emerged in the findings from this study. My mother asked me to get a job as soon as I graduated from a senior secondary school rather than have me enrol in higher education. Although I passed an entrance test from a state university, I could not follow my dream due to economic circumstances. I ended up working in a factory for almost two years after my secondary education. When I once again asked my mother to go to a university, I had to assure her that I would have a part-time job while I studied. I became an English teacher in a primary school in the fourth semester of my undergraduate study. I finally completed my undergraduate study in 2007 and was named the best graduate within the institution. I was then recruited to be an assistant lecturer at the same institution where I completed my undergraduate studies majoring in English education. Three years later, I was promoted to a higher level in the institution and was invited to take a master degree. However, my mother argued against my decision to take a master degree by saying I was supposed to support my brother financially to take his undergraduate study. I secretly applied for a scholarship to take a master degree and was granted an award to study at the University of Edinburgh. I convinced my mother that I would support the family financially, although I was abroad taking my master degree. One year after I had my master degree, I told my mother that I would take a PhD, but then she said she would not allow me to do this unless I married.

Now, I am a wife, a mother of two children and at the stage of completing my PhD. These final reflections in my thesis show that it was not a comfortable journey for me, educationally, culturally or socially. This is not the end of my journey, especially knowing that there is such gender inequality in education, so many corrupt practices and such major misinterpretations of the goals of learning in Indonesia. This thesis opens up

the next phase of my journey as I strive to make my small contribution to improve Indonesian education.

Appendix 1: Interview questions for teachers

Indicative semi-structured interview questions for teachers

(More will be developed during the interview around the topics of how the English teachers perceive the influence of English national examination on their teaching process)

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

- a. teaching qualification
 - b. teaching experience
 - c. the reason why you became an English teacher
 - d. what you love about teaching English
 - e. what you find most challenging/dislike about teaching English
1. As an English teacher, what do you think is really important in helping young people to learn English well?
 2. Are there any changes you modified in your teaching material, methods and practices for the final year students?
 3. Which element do you think is the most important in teaching the third graders?
 - a. students' cognitive competence
 - b. students' examination results
 - c. how the curriculum and the syllabus designed are aligned in the classroom
 4. What do you think about the English national examination? What is the effect of the national examination on your professional practice?
 5. How do you perceive the exam-oriented teaching activities? Do you think these activities can help the students to raise their exam scores?
 6. To what extent does the students' national examination results improve your teaching quality?
 7. Is there any positive impact of national examination on your teaching practice?

Finally...

8. Is there anything else you want to tell that has not been covered in previous questions?

Thank you so much for your time. It's been great talking to you.

Appendix 2: Interview questions for parents

Suggested Interview Questions for Parents

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
 - a. educational background
 - b. your current job
 - c. number of children you have
2. When did you start thinking seriously about which upper secondary school your child would go to?
3. What influenced your decision to send your child to this school? Did you consider any other schools? What made you choose this school?
4. How important do you think the national examination is and why?
5. Are there any approaches (for example working with your child at home, telling your child how important the exam is, using a tutor, or sending your child to a cramming school) you provide to help your child succeed in the national examination?
6. How good do you perceive the national examination for measuring your child's competence?
7. How do you feel about your child soon taking the national examination? How does your child feel?

Finally,

8. Do you have anything else you want to add as the final statement?

Thank you so much for your time. It's been great talking to you.

Appendix 3: Questions for focus group discussion with students

Indicative focus group questions for the students

(More will be developed around the topics of the students' view about how they and their English teacher perceive the influence of English national examination on their learning and teaching process)

1. How would you describe your experience in the English class this year?
 - a. curriculum
 - b. class activities
 - c. the role of the teacher
 - d. assessment
 - e. homework
2. Is this year more stressful than last year? If so, why? What has made it more stressful?
3. Have you noticed any changes your teacher made in his/her teaching material, methods and attitudes that might be influenced by the national examination?
4. How do your parents feel about you soon taking the national examination? How do they involve in your exam preparation?
5. To what extent does the national examination of English subject affects your learning activity? How does the national examination provide motivation for you?
6. What are some preparation activities that you find useful in getting you be better prepared for the national examination?
7. What suggestions would you give to your English teacher and parents to help you prepare for the national examination?

Finally,

8. Is there anything else you want me to know about your experience in learning English in this final year or about your opinion about the national examination of the English subject?

Thank you so much for your time. It's been great talking to you.

Appendix 4: Ethical approval



University of Glasgow | College of
Social Sciences

CSS July 2014

Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

Staff Research Ethics Application ☐

Postgraduate Student Research Ethics Application ☒

Application Details

Application Number: 400140090

Applicant's Name Maya Puspitasari

Project Title Investigating the Washback Effect of English National Examination in Indonesian Classroom Practices

Application Status

Approved

Start Date of Approval (d.m.yr) 17/1/15

(blank if Changes Required/ Rejected)

End Date of Approval of Research Project (d.m.yr) 30/9/17

Only if the applicant has been given approval can they proceed with their data collection with effect from the date of approval.

Recommendations (where Changes are Required)

- **Where changes are required all applicants must respond** in the relevant boxes to the recommendations of the Committee and upload this as the **Resubmission Document** online to explain the changes you have made to the application. All resubmitted application documents should then be uploaded.
- **If application is Rejected a full new application must be submitted via the online system.** Where recommendations are provided, they should be responded to and this document uploaded as part of the new application. A new reference number will be generated.

(Shaded areas will expand as text is added)

MAJOR RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPLICANT RESPONSE TO MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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MINOR RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPLICANT RESPONSE TO MINOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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University of Glasgow
College of Social Sciences
Florentine House, 53 Hillhead Street, Glasgow G12 8QF
The University of Glasgow, charity number SC004401

Tel: 0141-330-3007 or 1990

E-mail: socsci-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk

Appendix 5: Amendment approval



College of Social
Sciences

College Research Ethics

Request for Amendments - Reviewer Feedback

Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

Application Details

Staff Research Ethics Application ☐ Postgraduate Student Research Ethics Application ☒

Application Number: 400140090

Applicant's Name: Maya Puspitasari

Project Title: Investigating the Washback Effect of English National Examination in Indonesian Classroom Practices

Original Date of Application Approval: 17/01/2015

Date of Amendments Approved: 12/02/2016

Outcome: Amendments Approved

Reviewer Comments

Please retain this notification for future reference. If you have any enquiries, please email socsci-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk.

University of Glasgow
College of Social Sciences
Florentine House, 53 Hillhead Street, Glasgow G12 8QF
The University of Glasgow, charity number SC004401

E-mail: socsci-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk

Appendix 6: Letter for school principal



University
of Glasgow

College of Social
Sciences

February 2016

School Principal

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Maya Puspitasari. I am a PhD student at the University of Glasgow, United Kingdom. Your school has been chosen to participate in my research entitled “Investigating the Washback Effect of English National Examination on Indonesian Classroom Practices”.

My research study focuses on exploring the teachers’ perceptions and attitudes of the influence of English national Examination on their teaching practices. There are two methods I will use to gather evidence for my study; individual interviews and focus group discussion. I would really appreciate it if I could conduct this research in your school. This will involve one English teacher who teaches the final year students, one final year class and up to three parents.

First, I will undertake individual interview with the teachers. Second, I will ask eight to ten students to do focus group discussion. Third, parents whose child studying in the final year will be asked to participate in this study. The questions are about how the elements perceive the English national examination.

I really appreciate you taking time to consider my request and would be very grateful if you would agree to be part of this important project. Thank you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Maya Puspitasari

m.puspitasari.1@research.gla.ac.uk

Appendix 7: Plain Language Statement and Consent Form



Plain Language Statement

1. Study title and Researcher Details

Investigating the Washback Effect of English National Examination in Indonesian Classroom Practices

Maya Puspitasari

This project is part of my PhD study.

2. Invitation

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to explore teachers' perceptions and attitudes of the influence of the English national examination on their classroom practice.

4. Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen since you are an English teacher who teaches in Kabupaten Bandung, West Java Indonesia. This is the area where the investigation for my PhD will take place.

5. Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part in this study. However, your contribution will be extremely valuable in helping me to understand the extent to which the English national examination impacts on your professional practice. Even if you agree to take part but later change your mind, you can withdraw at any point with no consequences.

6. What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be asked to undertake an interview with a research assistant. If you wish to take part of this study, you will be asked to identify convenient time and location to be interviewed. A research

assistant will ask some questions on your perceptions of the impact that the English national exam has in your classroom practices.

The central aim of the interview is to explore in some depth how you perceive the national exam has influenced your classroom practice. The in-depth interview will last a maximum of 30mins. The interview will be audio-recorded if you give permission.

Interview tapes and transcripts will be held in confidence. They will not be used other than for the purposes described above and third parties will not be allowed access to them (except as may be required by the law). However, if you request it, you will be supplied with a copy of *your* interview transcript so that you can comment on and edit it as you see fit (please give your email below).

.....

This study will have no direct implication for you as an English teacher. However, in the future this study could offer insights that could help to provide a better educational experience for students undertaking the English national examination.

7. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes, absolutely. Your name will be anonymous. What you say in the interview will not be associated with you personally. Your name will not appear in any publications linked to this study.

8. What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of this study will be written up into a thesis as part of my PhD requirements. Where it is possible, I also hope to publish in academic journals, conferences and/or books. These publications will be used to inform the investigation of washback effect of the English national exam in Indonesian classroom practices. I will not identify any person who participated in the study.

9. Who is organising and funding the research? (If relevant)

I am funded by the Indonesian Directorate General of Higher Education (DGHE).

10. Who has reviewed the study?

In conducting this research, I am under supervision of two supervisors from the University of Glasgow; Prof. Louise E. Hayward and Dr. Oscar Odena. I have at least one supervision meeting with them in a month.

This study has also met an ethical approval from the ethics committee of the College of Social Sciences, University of Glasgow.

11. Contact for Further Information

If you wish to have further information about this study, you may contact me by email at m.puspitasari.1@research.gla.ac.uk

You may also contact the College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer by contacting Dr. Muir Houston at Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk if you have any concerns about the research I am conducting.

Appendix 8: Consent Form



Consent Form

Title of Project:

Investigating the Washback Effect of English National Examination in the Classroom Practices

Name of Researcher:

Maya Puspitasari

Please check

- ☐ I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions
- ☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
- ☐ I agree to take part in the above study.

Signature of participant	Date
--------------------------	------

Signature of person taking consent	Date
------------------------------------	------

Appendix 9: Guardian consent form



University
of Glasgow

College of Social
Sciences

Parent/Guardian Informed Consent

Identification of Researcher & Purpose of Study

Your child is being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Maya Puspitasari from the University of Glasgow, United Kingdom. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of English national examination on teaching and learning practices. This study will contribute to the researcher's completion of her thesis.

Research Procedures

Should you decide to allow your child to participate in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form once all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. This study consists of: questionnaire, classroom observations and focus group discussion that will be administered in [REDACTED]. Your child will be asked to express their own thoughts regarding to 19 statements in the questionnaire by choosing 'to a great extent', 'to some extent' or 'not at all'. S/He is also required to act naturally during the observation as s/he learns in the classroom and also to provide answers to a series of questions related to the impact of the exam on his/her learning practices in the interview. The researcher will audio-video tape both the observations and the interview.

Time Required

Participation in this study will require four meetings of English class (for the classroom observations) and up to 30 minutes for the focus group interview.

Risks

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits to the child nor parents for participating in this study.

Payment for participation

There will be no payment rewarded for taking part in the study.

Confidentiality

The results of this research will be presented at thesis, viva, seminar, conference, etc. Your child will be identified in the research records by a code name or number. When the results of this research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your child's identity. All data will be stored in a secure location accessible only to the researcher and her assistants. Upon completion of the study, all information that matches up individual respondents with their answers will be destroyed.

There is one exception to confidentiality we need to make you aware of. In certain research studies, it is our ethical responsibility to report situations of child abuse, child neglect, or any life-threatening situation to appropriate authorities. However, we are not seeking this type of information in our study nor will you be asked questions about these issues.

Participation & Withdrawal

Your child's participation is entirely voluntary. S/he is free to choose not to participate. Should you and your child choose to participate, s/he can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind.

Further Questions about the Study

If you have questions or concerns during the time of your child's participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final results of this study, please contact:

Maya Puspitasari Researcher's Name	Prof. E. Louise Hayward
School of Education	School of Education
University of Glasgow	University of Glasgow
m.puspitasari.1@research.gla.ac.uk	Louise.Hayward@glasgow.ac.uk

Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject

Dr. Muir Houston

The College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer

University of Glasgow

Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk

Giving of Consent

I have read this consent form and I understand what is being requested of my child as a participant in this study. I freely consent for my child to participate. I have been given satisfactory answers to my questions. The researcher provided me with a copy of this form. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age.

I give consent for my child to get involved in:

☐ Classroom observation

☐ Focus group discussion

☐ Being audio-video taped

_____ (parent's initial)

Name of Child (Printed)

Name of Parent/Guardian (Printed)

Name of Parent/Guardian (Signed)

Date

Name of Researcher (Signed)

Date

Appendix 10: Report of classroom observations of the main study

Classroom Observations

ARMADILLO LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL

1st Meeting

29 February 2016

Material: Reading (Narrative Text)

Skill: Listening

- 10.10 The teacher wrote the lyric of “Itsy Bitsy Spider” on the whiteboard.
- 10.12 The teacher sang the song, followed by the students.
- 10.14 The whole class sang the song several times.
- 10.15 The teacher reviewed five kinds of text: recount, procedure, descriptive, report and narrative texts.
- 10.17 The teacher told the class that that day’s lesson would be about narrative text.
- 10.18 The teacher spread pieces of paper to the students (one piece of paper for two students)
- 10.18 The class listened to a text read by a recorded voice in a phone.
- 10.20 Then the teacher asked the students to write down some words (read by the teacher) that they did not understand.
- 10.24 The teacher asked the students to write difficult words they did not know the Indonesian translation on the blackboard.
- 10.27 The class discussed the Indonesian translation of words written on the blackboard.
- 10.28 The teacher corrected the spelling of the words.
- 10.31 She asked the students to group in a pair.
- 10.32 She then read the text one more time.
- 10.35 The rest words that had not been translated written on the blackboard were translated into Indonesian by the teacher.
- 10.36 She then played the recorded voice once more.
- 10.39 Some groups discussed the answers of the true-false questions based on the text and some did not.
- 10.55 The class translated statement number 8 into Indonesian.
- 10.56 The teacher read the text then the class vocally translated it into Indonesian.
- 10.57 The teacher asked the moral value of the text.
- 10.58 The teacher asked the purpose of the narrative text.
- 10.59 The teacher reviewed the story about “Roro Jongrang”.
- 11.00 The teacher asked new vocabularies taken from the text.

2nd Meeting

4 March 2016

Material: Narrative Text

Skill: Reading

- 07.10 The teacher asked the students to check their desks and see whether there was rubbish or not and asked them to put it in the bin.
- 07.13 The class made a prayer.
- 07.14 The teacher asked the students about the material learned in the last lesson.
- 07.15 The teacher administered a piece of paper contained a text (each piece for four students).
The teacher reminded about the national examination; “How can we understand the questions of the national examination if we don’t know the vocabularies?”
- 07.16 The teacher asked the students to underline the words in the text that they did not know the Indonesian translation.
- 07.18 The teacher checked each group of four students.
- 07.20 The class discussed each word and the teacher wrote down the words on the whiteboard.
“Narrative text used second verb”
“If in the national examination, there is a question about ...”
The teacher asked the students to find the Indonesian translation of the words written on the whiteboard on the dictionary.
- 07.37 The teacher asked the students to read the words on the whiteboard.
- 07.37 The teacher reminded the students that there would be only two months left until the national examination held. The students expressed their freight and worry.
- 07.39 The teacher administered a piece of paper contained of questions related to the text and asked the students (in group) to answer the questions given.
- 07.42 The teacher walked around and checked the students’ work.
- 07.53 The teacher asked the students to write the right answer with a pen.
- 07.54 The class discussed the possible answers of each question.
- 07.59 The teacher asked a student to write down the question of number 5 on the whiteboard.
- 08.05 The teacher explained why the princess jumped into the river based on the text.
“One of the obstacles you will have in the national examination is ...”
- 08.06 The class then discussed the questions in part 2.
Some words from the text were translated into Indonesian.
- 08.15 The teacher asked the students about the contents of a narrative text (orientation, conflict, resolution, re-orientation); then she asked each content of the text “The Legend of Banyuwangi”.
- 08.20 The teacher asked the students to answer the questions left and collected their work once they had finished.

3rd meeting**07 March 2016**

Skill: Writing

- 10.10 The teacher described the importance of the national examination, “NEM will consider which school you can enrol in”.
- 10.12 The teacher divided the students into several groups consist of six students.
- 10.17 The teacher gave a piece of paper to each group and said, “Arrange the jumbled words into a right sentence”. The teacher gave the students 15 minutes to do the task.
- 10.19 The teacher went around to each group to check the students’ work.
The students were free to open English – Indonesian dictionary while in the national examination they could not do it.
The disadvantage of making group is that not everyone does the task.
Some students worked on the task together, some seemed to depend on the others to do the task. Did the teacher notice the situation? How could she handle this situation since in the national examination the students would work on their own?
The teacher scaffolded (helped) the students to do the work.
- 10.48 The teacher then divided the students into different groups.
- 10.51 “Arrange the sentences into a paragraph”
- 11.08 The teacher collected the groups’ works.
- 11.14 The teacher asked a student to read the paragraph.
- 11.16 The teacher asked another student to read the paragraph.
- 11.20 The teacher explained the correct order of the paragraph.
- 11.25 The teacher asked the moral value of the paragraph.
“You need to solve the problems you may face right now”
“You need to open the dictionary more often” was the solution of the problems that the teacher offered.

4th meeting**17 March 2016**

Skill: Reading

Material: LKS Page 53

- 07.15 The teacher reminded the students that the national examination was getting closer. “Consider the national examination as the try-out”
- 07.17 The class discussed the questions taken from Student Work Sheet.
The answer needed to be the same though there might be different answers for different contexts.
- 07.25 The teacher told the students not to read the text before they read the questions.
The teacher gave the students a tip to blacken the answer sheet in the national examination.
- 07.36 The teacher told the students the similar expressions that were incorrect:
“Can I borrow the menu?”
“May I see the menu?”
The teacher said that the word “I” was arrogant, betrayal and greedy.

The teacher led the students to the right answer.

Some students answered a correct answer but the teacher told that it was wrong.

08.07 The teacher mentioned how many items of the kinds of the questions that would be in the national examination.

SAVANNA LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL

1st Meeting

23 February 2016

Skill: Reading

Material: LKS

- 10.10 The class discussed the kinds of text.
- 10.12 The teacher gave the hints about the answer of the question she asked. However, no one could answer it until they opened their notebook and saw what they had written about the kinds of text.
The activity was mainly presented in Indonesian language.
- 10.14 The teacher asked one of the students to read the question number 41.
- 10.15 The teacher discussed each option of the answers given and asked whether it was the right answer or not.
- 10.16 She asked the students to translate each option.
- 10.17 The teacher asked one of the students to read the question number 42 and the students which the right answer was.
- 10.18 She gave the student a dictionary to find the Indonesian word for the word she asked.
- 10.18 She then asked a student to bring a dictionary since he didn't bring his own.
- 10.19 The class kept repeating discussing the questions until number 50.
- 10.31 She kept asking the Indonesian word for each option of the questions.
- 10.32 The teacher asked the students to count the right answers from 26 to 50.
- 10.33 The teacher then asked how many right answers of each student had and wrote it down on the grade book.
- 10.35 The teacher then explained the procedural text that would be tested in the practical test.
- 10.37 The class mentioned the step to make apple juice.
- 10.44 The teacher asked the students to write the steps how to make a cup of coffee.
- 10.44 The students did the task on their work book.
- 11.00 She asked the students to collect their work book.
- 11.00 The teacher marked the students' works and wrote it on her book.

2nd Meeting

08 March 2016

Skill: Reading

Material: LKS

- 10.10 The class discussed national examination – like questions.
- 10.16 The students one by one read the questions.
(Less English – Indonesian translation included)
Teacher-centered.
The students seemed to be less motivated in discussing the material.
- 10.35 The teacher asked a student to read the questions and it was repeated until

- the last question.
- 10.57 The teacher read a text then translated it into Indonesian.
- 11.20 The class finished.

3rd Meeting

14 March 2016

Material: Grammar

- 08.25 The teacher called the name of the students based on the attendance list.
- 08.30 The teacher reviewed the narrative text.
- 08.32 The teacher asked a student to move to the front seat as he fell asleep.
- 08.35 The teacher told the students that they would discuss about the Past Perfect Tense.
- 08.36 The teacher wrote down the formula of Past Perfect Tense on the blackboard.
- 08.39 The teacher wrote down the function of Past Perfect Tense on the blackboard.
- 08.42 The teacher wrote down an example of Past Perfect Tense.
- 08.45 The teacher asked the students to write down what had been written on the blackboard.
- 08.50 The teacher asked a student to read a sentence written on the blackboard and asked the class to translate it into Indonesian.
- 08.51 The teacher asked a student to write the interrogative form of the sentence on the blackboard.
- 08.57 The teacher wrote down a sentence on the blackboard.
- 08.59 The teacher asked a student to change the sentence written into Past Perfect form.
- 09.05 The teacher wrote down four sentences on the blackboard and asked the students to change the sentences into the Past Perfect form.
- 09.25 The teacher asked the students to collect their workbook and she checked the students' work.
- 09.36 The teacher asked a student to write down the past perfect form of the first sentence on the blackboard.
- 09.37 The teacher asked other students to write the second, third and fourth sentence on the blackboard.
- “Try-out is a reflection of your later exam result”

4th Meeting

19 April 2016

- 11.20 The teacher called the name of the students based on the attendance list.
- 11.25 The teacher asked the students to open the questions sheet.
- 11.26 The teacher asked one student to read the question number 1. It was repeated until question number 25.
- The class was not conducive.
- 12.05 The teacher checked the students' grade and wrote in on the grade book.

PLEASANT HILL LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL

2nd Meeting

18 March 2016

Skill: Reading

- 07.08 The class was started by reading Quran.
- 07.14 The teacher called the name of the students one by one based on the attendance list.
- 07.19 The teacher wrote down five genres of text (descriptive, narrative, procedural, recount and report) on the whiteboard.
- 07.20 The teacher asked five students to define each text.
- 07.24 The teacher told the students to remember the definition of the text since it would be tested in the try-out and the national examination.
- 07.30 The class discussed questions sheet taken from school exam in 2015.
- 07.44 The teacher reminded the students to read carefully the question.
The teacher read the text then translated it into Indonesian.

3rd Meeting

1 April 2016

Skill: Reading

- 07.15 The teacher called the name of the students.
- 07.19 The teacher asked the students to open their “cramming” book.
- 07.22 The class discussed the questions from the book.
- 07.27 The teacher read a text then translated it into Indonesian language.

4th Meeting

4 April 2016

- 10.17 The teacher called the students one by one.
- 10.22 The teacher asked the students to open the try-out questions sheet.
- 10.24 The teacher reminded that the students needed to know the items of the Standard of Graduate Competence (SKL)
Reading
 - a. Short functional text
 - Caution
 - Invitation
 - Greeting
 - Letter
 - Short Message
 - b. Genre
 - Procedural text
 - Descriptive
 - Narrative
 - Recount
 - Report

Writing

“Those are the SKL that would be tested next week”

MILLENNIUM LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL

1st Meeting

1 April 2016

- 08.57 The teacher asked the students to open the book.
- 09.00 The teacher told the students that there would be practical test in April the 4th to the 7th 2016 and Thursday would be for English test.
- 09.01 The teacher asked a student to read a question taken from exercise book. It was done repeatedly.
- 09.02 The teacher asked a student to read the second paragraph of the text.
- 09.03 The teacher translated the paragraph into Indonesian.

2nd Meeting

7 April 2016

- 07.34 The teacher told the students that there was an earthquake last night. The teacher related the earthquake with religious side.
- 07.36 The teacher asked the students to open the book.
- 07.40 The class discussed the answers of the questions. Each student mentioned the answer (multiple choices) of questions number 25 to 50 and gave the reason of the answer.
The teacher counted how many students who chose the wrong answer in every question.
- 08.26 The teacher told the students that she would spare her time on Wednesday after school if there were any of the students who would like to discuss what had not been understood for every lesson.
The teacher told the students the importance of the dictionary so they needed to bring it to the English class.

3rd Meeting

21 April 2016

- 07.35 The teacher told the students what they should do in the lesson; each student had to have 10 new vocabularies.
- 07.37 The teacher distributed test-like paper to the students.
- 07.39 The teacher guided the students to answer the questions.
- 08.17 The teacher asked one student to read the question number 1 and discussed the answer. It was repeated until question number 15.

Appendix 11: A letter from school principal



TERAKREDITASI – B

SURAT KETERANGAN

Nomor: 421.3/067 -SMP.C/V/2016

Yang bertanda tangan dibawah ini :

Nama : [REDACTED]
NIP/NUPTK : -
Pangkat/Gol. : -
Jabatan : Kepala Sekolah

Menerangkan dengan sesungguhnya bahwa :

Nama : MAYA PUSPITASARI
NIM : 2104608 P
Prodi : Bahasa Inggris
Konsentrasi : Assessment
Universitas : University of Glasgow

Telah melaksanakan penelitian dengan judul *Investigating the washback effect of English National Examination on Indonesian Classroom Practices*, pada [REDACTED] Kabupaten Bandung.

Demikian surat keterangan ini dibuat untuk dapat dipergunakan sebagaimana mestinya.

[REDACTED] 2 Mei 2016
Kepala Sekolah,
[REDACTED]

Appendix 12: Sample of coding

examination).	Comment [MP10]: Teaching methods and materials
Me : Is there any particular time for example enhancement class here or do you have extra hours in teaching English since you believe that the students require it?	
Indri : For the extra hours, it's not possible to do it in this school. In this school, it's quite different with the regular school, here we have 22 subjects. It's different with the other schools whose the students go home at 1 or 2 p.m. Here, the students go home at 3 p.m. So if we hold extra class, they will go home late. Since the class for the English subject is twice a week, so the first meeting in a week I teach based on the syllabus, the other meeting I use it to discuss the questions ((of the previous national examination)).	<p>Comment [MP11]: She needed enhancement class but it was impossible</p> <p>Comment [MP12]: The reason why there was no enhancement class</p> <p>Comment [MP13]: Teaching materials</p>
Me : Since when has it been applied?	
Indri : Since the second semester.	
Me : So you started it in the second semester?	
Indri : Yes, the second semester. I teach them systematically in the first semester.	
Me : So there is no extra hour?	
Indri : Yes, there is no extra hour. It's not because I don't need it, but we don't have the time. The students already come home at 3, so it's not really good to make them go home late.	Comment [MP14]: She needed enhancement but it was impossible

Appendix 13: Sample of categorizing

Themes	Sub-themes	Sub-subthemes
Feeling	Neutral	I feel usual. I don't worry about it.
		I don't feel anxious. I feel relaxed
	Why	Because the one who determines the decision is God
		The important thing there was no cheating or any other foxy tricks during the national examination.
	High level of anxiety	I'm nervous. ...I'm the one who is the most stressful.
		I feel nervous.
		I realize I feel a little bit anxious
		I feel anxious.
		I'm nervous. ...I'm the one who is the most stressful.
		I'm nervous
		I was afraid he couldn't do the national examination.
		I am indeed anxious
	Why	I'm afraid he couldn't graduate
		...he doesn't have any choice for his upper secondary school
		I'm afraid his scores of the national examination will not sufficient enough for enrolling him in the school. I'm afraid where he will continue his study if he is not accepted in that school
		As I work as the administration staff in that school, if my own daughter gets bad scores in the national examination, it will truly influence me.
		I'm afraid her scores will be low.
		I'm afraid the scores will not be sufficient to enroll in the public school.
		I don't want him not to pass the national examination.
		...since she needs to go to the public school...I am nervous since it depends on the scores of the national examination.

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